

# ABDI (MTS)

## FINNS`OPINIOS ON FOREING AND SECURITY POLICY, NATIONAL DEFENCE AND SECURITY

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## **Finns`opinions on foreign and security policy, national defence and security**

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## PREFACE

A survey commissioned by the Advisory Board for Defence Information (ABDI) explored the opinions of Finnish people on Finnish foreign and security policy and on defence policy. The survey also included questions on factors relating to safety and citizens' sense of security pertaining to developments concerning the next five years, on factors giving rise to concern as well as on confidence over the future of the European Union. Altogether 18 questions were asked, one of which for the first time.

Commissioned by the ABDI, the survey was carried out by Taloustutkimus Oy, a market research company. The study was done as a part of omnibus research carried out in the form of personal interviews. Altogether 1,000 persons were interviewed. The target group of the study comprised the entire population between the ages of 15 and 79, with the exception of the Åland Islands. The sample was formed by quota sampling in which the target group's quotas were the distribution of age, gender, province and municipality. The interviews were conducted at 93 localities, 52 of which were cities and the remaining 41 other municipality types. The sample was weighted to match the target group. The weighted N values correspond to the population aged 15 to 79 in thousands (SVT 31 December 2015).

The interviews were conducted from 22 September to 11 October, 2016. The error of margin is  $\pm$  three point two (3.2) percentage points.

When interpreting background variables related to party affiliation, it must be taken into account that the margin of error regarding the large parties is smaller, which enables the collection of more reliable information on them compared to smaller parties whose supporters are numerically fewer in the sample.

The following question was asked: 'Which party would you vote for, if parliamentary elections were held now?' Of all of the respondents, 65 per cent (654 persons) revealed their party affiliation, while 35 per cent (346) declined to do so. In 2015 the respective numbers were 78 per cent and 22 per cent.

The report comprises a text section with illustrating figures that also present the time sequence of the previously asked questions. These illustrations were prepared by Taloustutkimus Oy. Some of the questions represent a continuous sequence since 1964. The questions were drawn up by the research branch and work branch of the ABDI. The research branch compiled the report.

The data from this survey, like the previous surveys, are stored in the Finnish Social Science Data Archive at the University of Tampere ([www.fsd.uta.fi](http://www.fsd.uta.fi)).

The ABDI's survey reports are available in Finnish, Swedish and English on the ABDI's home page ([www.defmin.fi/mts](http://www.defmin.fi/mts)).

In Sweden, the 'Myndighet för Samhällsskydd och Beredskap' (MSB) conducts similar surveys. The most recent report was published in January, 2016. It is available at <https://www.msb.se/Sok/?query=opinionsunders%c3%b6kningen+2016>

Also in Norway, the 'Folk og Forsvar' conducts annual surveys on security and defence policy. Their most recent report was published in September, 2016. It is available at <http://www.folkogforsvar.no/meningsmalinger/meningsmalinger-2016>

The survey reports published by the ABDI are in the public domain. When referring to them, reference must be made stating that the data come from a survey conducted by the ABDI.

# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	7
Confidence in the management of foreign policy has increased from the past year	9
Support for military non-alignment has increased a little	9
Support for and disapproval of NATO membership remains the same	10
Why say no to NATO membership?	11
Why say yes to NATO membership?	11
No opinion – why?	12
Sweden's effect on Finland-NATO relations	12
Confidence in the management of defence policy continues to grow	13
General conscription garners increasing support	14
The present model of general conscription is preferred	16
Support for the current or an increased level of defence appropriations	17
Citizens' willingness to defend Finland has decreased from the past year	18
Strong support for military cooperation with Sweden and the Nordic countries, and within the EU	21
Nordic and EU defence cooperation is believed to improve Finland's security	22
The UN and the EU are believed to contribute positively to Finland's security, Russia is viewed as a negative influence	23
Weakening confidence in the future of the European Union	24
Russia's recent activities are still believed to negatively impact Finland's security	25
Compared to men, women still envisage the future as more insecure	25
The global refugee situation and Finland's employment situation cause the greatest concern	26
Preparedness for different kinds of threats	27
The Research Branch of ABDI in 2015–2019	69
Chairs of the ABDI in 2015–2019	69





## Introduction

### **Confidence in the management of foreign policy has increased from the past year**

Confidence in the management of foreign policy has increased from the past year. Seven out of ten think it is well managed today while 63 per cent held this opinion last year.

The negative effects of Russia's recent activities on Finland's security are considered to have diminished

From 2007–2010 the ABDI asked Finns about the effects of the EU, OSCE, NATO, UN, China, Russia and the United States on Finland. The same question was also asked this time. The biggest change to the 2010 survey was the fact that Russia's negative effect is seen as having clearly grown. Now, approximately one half of the respondents opine that Russian activities have a negative effect on Finland's security, when in 2010 28% felt this way. In general, the UN and the EU are viewed as having positive effects on Finland's security. This was also the case in 2010.

### **Support for and against NATO membership has not changed**

While a quarter of the respondents believe that Finland should seek NATO membership, 61 per cent of them disagree. The ABDI has polled this question for 12 years already; support for NATO membership has varied from 18 to 30 per cent and opposition to it has ranged from 58 to 71 per cent.

This was the second time the ABDI asked whether Finland should also seek NATO membership if Sweden decided to do so. One third of the respondents hold the view that Finland should act likewise. This mirrors the responses to the 2007 survey, when the question was asked for the first time. Now, slightly over one half represent the opposing view, whereas, previously, it was six out of ten.

## **Weakening confidence in the future of the European Union**

This was the second time the ABDI asked about confidence in the future of the European Union. The first time the question was polled was in 2005. Now, one half of the respondents have weakened confidence in the future of the European Union, whereas in 2005 a little over one third of them thought this way. Almost one half of the respondents hold that their confidence in the EU is unchanged – ten years ago this view was held by a little more than half of them.

## **Increasing support for general conscription**

Four fifths of the respondents support the present system of general conscription. The last time an equally high number was recorded was in 2003. This question has been asked since 2001, with support for the present general conscription system varying from 63 to 80 per cent.

## **Citizens' willingness to defend Finland has decreased from the past year**

'If Finland were attacked, should Finns, in your opinion, take up arms to defend themselves in all situations, even if the outcome seemed uncertain.'

Out of the entire population, 71 per cent say yes to the question; a year ago the same number was 78 per cent. Sixty-four per cent (73% in 2015) of women and 79 per cent of men (84%) think so. One fifth take the opposite view, 16 per cent of men and 25 per cent of women.

When analysed according to age groups the most negative views are held by those between 25 to 35 years of age, 31 per cent.

## **The global refugee crisis and Finland's employment situation cause the greatest concern**

The global refugee situation, which was queried for the very first time this year, causes concern for 85 per cent of the respondents. The second biggest cause of concern is Finland's employment situation, 84 per cent. Sixty-one per cent of the respondents are worried about the growing numbers of migrants; this was 67 per cent in 2015.

## Confidence in the management of foreign policy has increased from the past year

Seventy per cent of the respondents (63% in 2015) think that Finnish foreign policy is well managed; 72% (65%) of men and 68% (61%) of women take this view. One quarter, 24% (32%) hold the opposite opinion, 24% of both men (32%) and women (31%).

Of the supporters of the Centre Party, 85% (73% in 2015) think that Finnish defence policy is well managed; 83% (83%) of the Coalition Party; 75% (63%) of the Social Democratic Party (SDP); 71% (57%) of the Green Party; 69% (61%) of the Left Alliance; and 42% of the Finns Party supporters (50%) agree.

Of the supporters of the Finns Party, 52% (47% in 2015) think that Finnish foreign policy is poorly managed as do 27 (36%) of the supporters of the Left Alliance; 25% of the SDP and the Green Party (35% and 38%); 17% (15%) of the Coalition Party; and 10% (24%) of the Centre Party.

From 2000–2016 the proportion of respondents who opined that Finnish foreign policy is well managed has ranged from 63 to 89 per cent. The proportion of those respondents who view Finnish foreign policy as being poorly managed has varied from 7 to 32 per cent. (Figures 1 and 2)

## Support for military non-alignment has increased a little

More than half of the respondents, 57% (54% in 2015), support Finland's military non-alignment, 57% (56%) of men and 58% (52%) of women take this view. Support for non-alignment is higher in the older age groups, 63% (46%) among those 35 to 49 years of age, and 60% (60%) among those over 50 years of age. One half in those age groups younger than 35 support military non-alignment (51% and 54%, respectively).

Of the supporters of the Finns Party, 74% (66% in 2015) are in favour of military non-alliance as are 67% (66%) of the supporters of the SDP; 66% (73%) of the Left Alliance; 60% (57%) of the Green Party; 56% (57%) of the Centre Party; and 35% (32%) of the Coalition Party.

Slightly under one third of the respondents, 31% (33% in 2015), support Finland's military non-alignment, 36% (37%) of men and 26% (30%) of women. When it

comes to the different age groups, military alignment garners highest support among those from 25 to 34 years of age, 36% (41%), and the least support among those from 35 to 49 years of age, 29% (37%). Thirty per cent (30%) of those older than 50, and 31% (28%) of those from 15 to 24 years of age support it.

Of the supporters of the Coalition Party, 60% (57% in 2015) support military alignment as do 32% (16%) of the supporters of the Left Alliance; 30% (29%) of the Centre Party; 29% (33%) of the Green Party; 27% (30%) of the SDP; and 19% (30%) of the Finns Party.

Twelve per cent (12% in 2015) of the respondents had no opinion, 7% (7%) of men and 16% (18%) of women. (Figures 3 and 4)

### **Support for and disapproval of NATO membership remains the same**

One quarter, 25% (27% in 2015), of the respondents answered positively to the question 'Should, in your opinion, Finland seek NATO membership?', 30% (31%) of men and 20% (24%) of women. Looked at by age group the highest number of positive answers, 27%, came from those older than 50 years of age and those among the 25 to 34 years of age group (26% and 30%). The lowest number came from those younger than 25 years or age, 20% (20%), and those 35 to 49 years of age, 22% (33%).

Of the supporters of the Coalition Party, 53% (56% in 2015) support NATO membership as do 29% (22%) of the supporters of the Centre Party; 24% (21%) of the Green Party; 25% (25%) of the Finns Party; 23% (14%) of the Left Alliance; and 16% (27%) of the SDP.

Sixty-one per cent of the respondents hold a negative view on Finland's NATO membership (58% in 2015), 62 (61 %) of men and 60% (55 %) of women. The highest opposition can be found among those 35 to 49 years old, 68% (48%), and the least opposition among those younger than 25 years of age, 54% (62%). Fifty-eight per cent (61%) of the 25 to 34 year olds and 60% (61%) of those older than 50 have a negative opinion.

The negative opinion is shared by 77% (66% in 2015) of the SDP supporters and 75% (81%) of the Left Alliance; 73% (61%) of the Finns Party; 62% (62%) of the Green Party; 57% (66%) of the Centre Party; and 33% (28%) of the Coalition Party supporters.

Fourteen per cent (15% in 2015) of the respondents had no opinion, 8% (8%) of men and 20% (21%) of women. Those having no opinion represent the following age groups: of those younger than 25 years of age, 25% (18%); of the 25 to 34 years of age, 15% (9%); of the 35 to 49 years of age, 10% (19%); and of those older than 50 years of age, 12% (13%). (Figures 5 and 6)

### Why say no to NATO membership?

Over 80 per cent of those interviewed elaborated on their positive or negative stance towards NATO membership.

The most frequently cited reason (N = 181/526) against Finland's NATO membership was the fact that Russia is our neighbour.

*'It would only mess up our dealings with Russia.' 'The relations with Russia will remain better – there is no sense in provoking the big bear.'*

The second most frequently reported argument (N = 96/526) entailed the current good situation, stating that Finland's foreign policy is working perfectly well.

*'Well, I think that the present policy of remaining between the east and the west is pretty good.' 'If we remain non-aligned, the threat against Finland will be lower.'*

The third most frequently cited reason (N = 63/526) against Finland's NATO membership concerned the cost.

*'Most likely it would mean a higher financial expenditure for Finland.' 'NATO membership would incur extra costs to taxpayers.'*

Other issues mentioned in the justifications also included Finns ending up involved in the conflicts and wars of other countries (N = 47), increasing insecurity (N = 36), and Finland losing its sovereign decision-making ability (N = 34).

### Why say yes to NATO membership?

The most frequently cited reasons (N = 138/241) stated in favour of joining NATO were increasing security and the availability of foreign assistance.

*'Military cooperation generates security.' 'NATO troops can come and help us if we need it.'*

The second most frequently reported rationalisation (N = 78/241) was the fact that NATO membership would bring forth security and support against the military threat of Russia.

*'The threat of Russia: Finland is too small to prevail without an ally; our resources and technologies are insignificant against a great power.' 'Compared to Russia, Finland is so small that it would need military support should the need arise.'*

The third most frequently cited motive (N = 18/241) was Finland's belonging to the western community of values.

*'The value community corresponds to Finnish values, it reduces ambiguity.' 'NATO is a western alliance which means that its values are more or less the same as those of Finland.'*

## No opinion – why?

The respondents who had no opinion on Finland's membership with NATO (N = 28/69) justified their view on the basis of ignorance on the subject, not having followed such topics in the first place.

*'I am not informed enough about the subject to be able to comment on it.' 'I personally feel that I don't know what the alternatives would actually mean – I guess I should look into it someday.'*

## Sweden's effect on Finland-NATO relations

In 2007 the ABDI asked whether Finland should seek NATO membership if Sweden decided to do so. The assessment of the effects of Finland's possible NATO membership, completed by a separate group of experts in June, drew attention to the consequences of Sweden's decisions on Finland's security, among other things. This issue, brought forward by the assessment, was the underlying motivation for the decision to ask this question again.

More than half, 54% (62% in 2007), of the respondents deem that Finland should not seek NATO membership even if Sweden decided to do so, 56% (66%) of men and 53% (59%) of women. Sixty-six per cent (65%) of the supporters of the SDP think this way; 62% of those of the Finns Party; 60% (85%) of the Left Alliance; 53% (62%) of the Green Party; 49% (62%) of the Centre Party; and 34% (38%) of the Coalition Party.

One third of the respondents, 34% (32% in 2007), believe that Finland should seek NATO membership in the abovementioned situation, 36% (31%) of men and 33% (33%) of women. Sixty-two per cent (57%) of Coalition Party supporters think this, as do 39% (35%) of the supporters of the Centre Party; 36% of the Finns Party and the Green Party (30%); 30% (12%) of the Left Alliance; and 29% (31%) of those of the SDP.

Eleven per cent (5% in 2007) of the respondents had no opinion, 8% (3%) of men and 15% (7%) of women. (Figure 7)

### **Confidence in the management of defence policy continues to grow**

Four out of five, 79% (74% in 2015), consider that Finland's defence policy is well managed, 81% (73%) of men and 76% (74%) of women hold this view. Eighty-seven per cent (80%) of those over 50 years of age think this way; 77% (74%) of those under 25; 71% (67%) of those 35 to 49 years of age; and 70% (69%) of those 25 to 34 years of age.

Of the supporters of the Centre Party, 87% (79% in 2015) think that Finnish defence policy is well managed as do 82% (85%) of the supporters of the Coalition Party; 81% (78%) of the Green Party; 79% (72%) of the Left Alliance; and 78% of the SDP and the Finns Party (47% and 75%).

Sixteen per cent (21% in 2015) of the respondents consider that Finland's defence policy is poorly managed, 16% (24%) of men and 15% (17%) of women. The most critical age groups are the 35 to 49 group, 24% (27%), and the 25 to 34 group, 20% (26%). Of the ones under 25 and over 50 years of age 11% (17% and 17%) think that defence policy is poorly managed.

Of the supporters of the Finns Party, 23% (50% in 2015) think that Finnish defence policy is poorly managed; 22% (21%) of the supporters of the SDP; 17% (12%) of the Coalition Party; 14% of the Green Party and the Left Alliance (19% and 20%); and 5% (18%) of the Centre Party concur. (Figures 8 and 9)

## General conscription garners increasing support

Four out of five, 79% (75% in 2015), support retaining Finland's present conscription system, 80% (73%) of men and 79% (76%) of women think this. Ninety per cent (83%) of those over 50 years of age; 76% (64%) of the 15–24 age group; 69% (65%) of the 25–34 age group; and 68% (70%) of the 35–49 age group agree.

Ninety-two per cent (85% in 2015) of the Centre Party supporters are in favour of the present system and 89% (84%) of the SDP; 76% (78%) of the Coalition Party; 74% (87%) of the Finns Party; 67% (62%) of the Left Alliance; and 59% (59%) of the Green Party supporters agree.

The adoption of selective conscription, in which a smaller number of men from each annual intake would be given military training, is supported by 11% of the respondents (13% in 2015), 10% (15%) of men and 11% (11%) of women hold this view.

Twenty-two per cent (23% in 2015) of the supporters of the Left Alliance are in favour of adopting a selective system; 19% (22%) of the Green Party; 16% (10%) of the Coalition Party; 11% (8%) of the Finns Party; 7% (10%) of the SDP; and 2% (10%) of the Centre Party supporters also think this way.

Nine per cent (10% in 2015) of the respondents would discontinue general conscription altogether and institute fully professional armed forces, 10% (11%) of men and 8% (9%) of women support this proposition. Of the Green Party supporters 19% (16%) think this way and 15% (5%) of the Finns Party; 10% (15%) of the Left Alliance; 7% (11%) of the Coalition Party; 5% (4%) of the Centre Party; and 4% (5%) of the SDP supporters agree. (Figures 10 and 11)

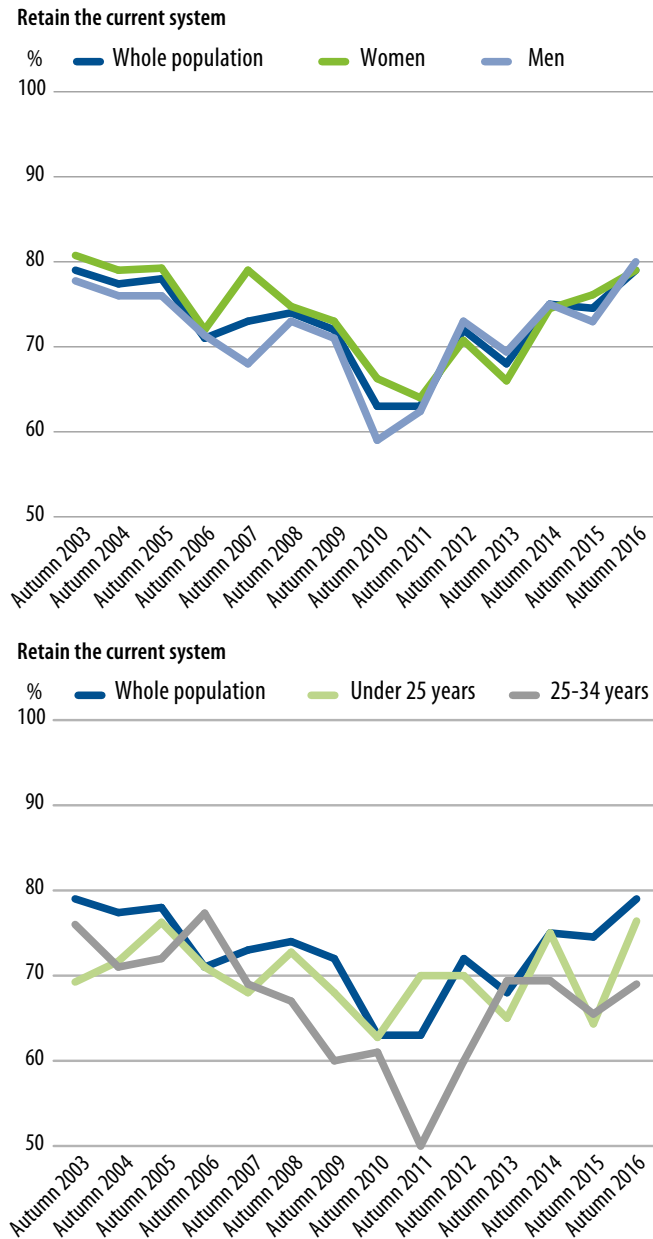
Figure 10A (below) illustrates the share of men and women of the entire population who support retaining the present system, as per the surveys from 2003–2016.

In addition, figure 10B illustrates the share of the persons below 25 years of age and those in the 25–34 age group, of the entire population, who support the present system, as per the surveys from 2003–2016.



### Figures 10A and 10B. General conscription

*"Based on a general, compulsory military service for men, Finnish military defence provides military training for as many of the same age group as possible, thus producing a large reserve personnel. Should the current system be retained or should we change over to a selective conscript service where only a part of the same age group receives military training? Or should we change over to a professional army?"*



## The present model of general conscription is preferred

A new question entailed the kind of system that Finland's defence system should be based on. There were four alternatives: 1) a present-kind of system where men are subject to general conscription and women can serve voluntarily; 2) general conscription for men and women alike; 3) voluntary military service for men and women and; 4) fully professional armed forces.

Over two thirds, 69%, believe that the present kind of general conscription for men and voluntary service for women is the model on which Finland's defence system should be based. Sixty-nine per cent of men and 68 per cent of women hold this view. The highest support for this comes from those older than 50 years of age, 75%. It is least supported among the 25–34 segment, 55%. Sixty-five per cent of those younger than 25 years of age and 68% of the 35–49 age group concur.

Eighty-three per cent of the Centre Party supporters are in favour of the present model; 79% of the SDP; 78% of the Coalition Party; 65% of the Finns Party; 56% of the Left Alliance; and 47% of the Green Party supporters agree.

Eleven per cent of the respondents are in favour of gender-equal conscription for men and women alike. There is not much variation between the different age groups except for the 35–49 olds, 6% of whom support this model.

Eighteen per cent of the Left Alliance supporters are in favour of such a model; 14% of the Green Party; 12% of the SDP; 9% of the Coalition Party; 8% of the Finns Party; and 7% of the Centre Party supporters agree.

Fourteen per cent were in favour of voluntary service for both men and women, 13% of men and 15% of women. The highest support, 19%, was found in the 15–34 age group. The lowest support, 10%, exists among those over 50 years of age. Fourteen per cent of the respondents in the 35–49 segment support this model.

Twenty-eight per cent of the Green Party supporters are in favour of this model; 21% of the Left Alliance; 14% of the Finns Party; 8% of the Coalition Party; and 6% of the Centre Party and the SDP supporters also hold this view.

Six per cent of the respondents are in favour of a model based on a fully professional military. The highest support for this, 11%, can be found among the 25–49 age groups. Conversely, the lowest support, 1%, exists among those over 50. Four per cent of the respondents in the 15–24 segment support this model.

Twelve per cent of the Finns Party supporters are in favour of a model based on fully professional armed forces; 10% of the Green Party; 6% of the Left Alliance; 5% of the Coalition Party; 4% of the SDP; and 3% of the Centre Party supporters agree with this proposition. (Figure 12)

Figure 10A (below) illustrates the share of men and women of the entire population who support retaining the present system, as per the surveys from 2003–2016. In addition, figure 10B illustrates the share of the persons below 25 years of age and those in the 25–34 age group, of the entire population, who support the present system, as per the surveys from 2003–2016.

## Support for the current or an increased level of defence appropriations

Nearly one half, 47% (47% in 2015) are of the opinion that defence appropriations should be raised, of men, more than a half, 53% (54%), and 40% (40%) of women think so.

Sixty-four per cent (62% in 2015) of the supporters of the Coalition Party are in favour of increasing defence appropriations as are 59% (59%) of the supporters of the Finns Party; 53% (49%) of the SDP; 47% (53%) of the Centre Party; 33% (27%) of the Left Alliance; and 28% (22%) of the Green Party.

Forty-one per cent (42% in 2015) of the respondents are in favour of keeping defence appropriations at the current level, 36% (37% in 2015) of men and 45% (47%) of women hold this view. Forty-eight per cent (43%) of the supporters of the Centre Party; 46% (60%) of the Green Party; 45% (44%) of the Left Alliance; 43% (46%) of the SDP; 30% (33%) of the Coalition Party; and 26% (35%) of the Finns Party supporters share this opinion.

Nine per cent (7% in 2015) of the respondents would reduce defence spending from its current level, 9% (9% in 2015) of men and 8% (6%) of women hold this view. Twenty-two per cent (13%) of the supporters of the Green Party as well as 18% (24%) of the Left Alliance; 15% (6%) of the Finns Party; 5% (4%) of the Coalition Party; 3% (5%) of the SDP; and 1% (1%) of the Centre Party supporters agree. (Figures 13 and 14)

### **Citizens' willingness to defend Finland has decreased from the past year**

The question was whether Finns should defend themselves by military means even in the face of an unpredictable outcome. Seventy-one per cent (78% in 2015) of the respondents believe they should, 79% (84%) of men and 64% (73%) of women think so.

A positive answer was given by 84% (80% in 2015) of the Finns Party supporters as well as 81% (81%) of the Coalition Party; 79% (89%) of the Centre Party; 77% (83%) of the SDP; 68% (77%) of the Left Alliance; and 52% (67%) of the Green Party supporters.

One fifth, 21% (16% in 2015), take the opposite view, 16% (12%) of men and 25% (21%) of women. Most negative answers, 31% (15%), are given by the 25–34 age group and by those 15–24 years of age, 27% (27%). The lowest amount of negative answers, 16% (13%), comes from those over 50 years of age. Nineteen per cent (18%) of the 35–49 segment give a negative answer.

Thirty-nine per cent (26% in 2015) of the supporters of the Green Party give a negative answer as do 24% (19%) of the Left Alliance; 16% (13%) of the SDP; 15% (8%) of the Centre Party; 14% (15%) of the Coalition Party; and 9% (15%) of the Finns Party supporters.

Eight per cent (5% in 2015) have no opinion, 11% (7%) of women and 5% (4%) of men.

The proportion of those that provided a positive answer to this question from 2000–2016 has varied from 71–81 per cent. Variance between negative answers ranged between 14–25 per cent. (Figures 24 and 25)

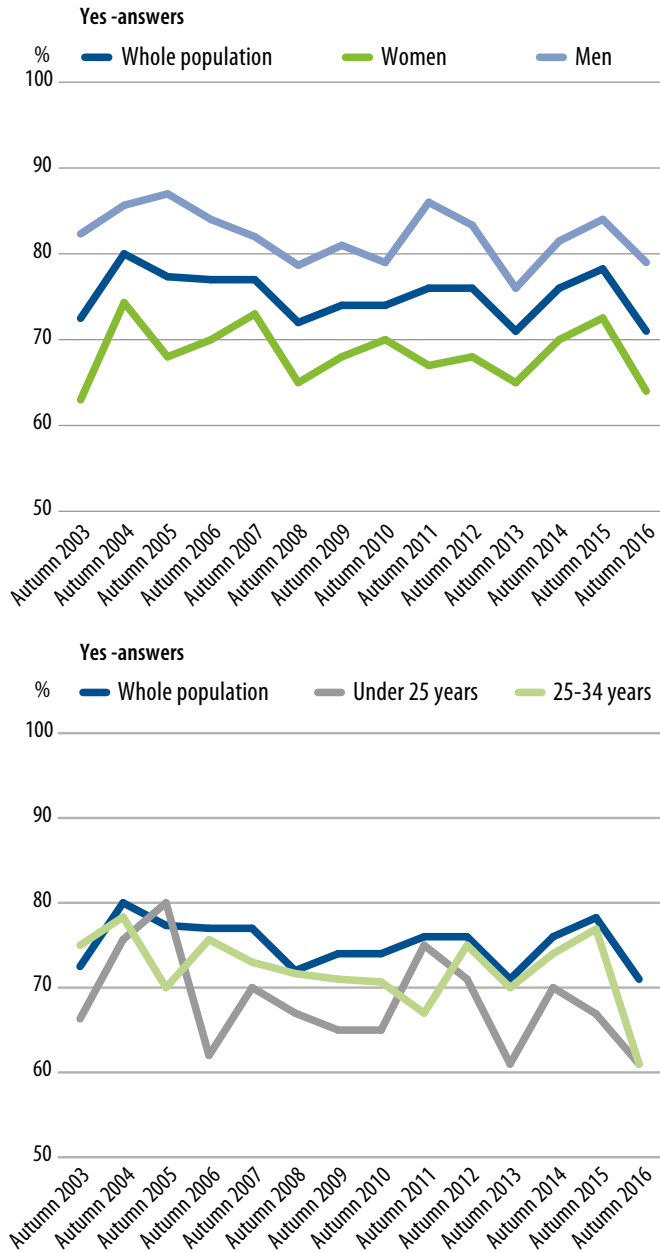
When it comes to background variables, it is gender, in particular, that explains the differences. Looking at the sequence starting from 2003, the proportion of positive answers among women varied between 63–74 per cent. However, among men in the same time frame it varied between 76–87 per cent.

Figure 15A (below) illustrates a breakdown of the entire population as well as the share of men and women who provided positive answers to this question, as per the surveys from 2003–2016.

There are also differences between age groups. The following figure, 15B, illustrates a breakdown of all of the respondents and the age groups of those below 25 and those 25–34 years of age, as per the surveys from 2003–2016.

**Figure 15A and 15B. The will to defend the nation**

*"If Finland were attacked, should Finns, in your opinion, take up arms to defend themselves in all situations, even if the outcome seemed uncertain?"*



## **Strong support for military cooperation with Sweden and the Nordic countries, and within the EU**

### **Military cooperation with Sweden and the other Nordic countries**

There is widespread and undivided support for military cooperation between Finland and Sweden, and with all Nordic countries. Almost all of the respondents, 94% (94% and 94% in 2015), are favourable towards military cooperation with Sweden and the other Nordic countries.

There is almost unanimous support for military cooperation between Finland and Sweden among the supporters of political parties. Whereas ninety-nine per cent of the Finns Party, the Coalition Party, the SDP and the Left Alliance supporters (97%, 99%, 94% and 91% in 2015) are favourable towards cooperation with the other Nordic countries; 98% (96%) of the Green Party; and 94% (99%) of the Centre Party supporters concur.

Military cooperation with Sweden is equally popular. Ninety-nine per cent (97% in 2015) of the Green Party supporters; 98% of the Coalition Party and the SDP (99% and 94%); 97% of the Finns Party and the Left Alliance (95% and 92%); and 94% (98%) of the Centre Party supporters also back it.

### **Finland's participation in developing military cooperation within the European Union**

Finns are favourable, 87% (84% in 2015), towards developing military cooperation within the European Union, 85% (87%) of men and 88% (81%) of women think this way. Ninety-six per cent of the Coalition Party and the SDP supporters (95% and 86%); 95% (87%) of the Green Party; 90% (74%) of the Left Alliance; 85% (87%) of the Centre Party; and 69% (84%) of the Finns Party supporters agree.

### **Military cooperation with the United States**

This year the question concerning military cooperation with the United States was posed for the very first time. Two thirds, 64%, have a positive view towards it, 67% of men and 61% of women.

Eighty-six per cent of the Coalition Party supporters are positive towards it as are 69% of the Centre Party; 65% of the SDP; 60% of the Green Party; 57% of the Left Alliance; and 56% of the Finns Party supporters.

Thirty per cent hold a negative view of military cooperation with the United States, 28% men and 32% women. Of the Finns Party supporters 44% have a negative attitude; 41% of the Left Alliance; 39% of the Green Party; 33% of the SDP; 25% of the Centre Party; and 13% of the Coalition Party supporters.

### **Military cooperation with NATO**

More than a half, 60% (58% in 2015), are positively disposed towards Finland-NATO cooperation, 63% (63%) of men and 58% (52%) of women. Eighty-six per cent (83%) of the Coalition Party supporters are positive about it as are 62% of the Centre Party and the Green Party supporters (60% and 56%); 53% (55%) of the SDP; 52% (35%) of the Left Alliance; and 51% (49%) of the Finns Party supporters.

A third of the respondents, 33% (37% in 2015), hold a negative view, 33% (35%) of men and 34% (38%) of women. The negative view is shared by 49% (51%) of the Finns Party supporters as well as 44% (59%) of the Left Alliance; 43% (43%) of the SDP; 35% (41%) of the Green Party; 32% (34%) of the Centre Party; and 13% (13%) of the Coalition Party supporters. (Figures 17–22)

### **Nordic and EU defence cooperation is believed to improve Finland's security**

Seventy-nine per cent (74% in 2015) of the respondents feel that participation in Nordic defence cooperation adds to the security of Finland and Finns. Correspondingly, 62% (56%) support participation in the EU's defence cooperation and 54% (50%) favour Finland's membership of the European Union. Moreover, 48% (45%) of the respondents believe that Finland's increasing international economic interaction adds to, rather than limits, security. For 46% (40%) of the respondents Finland's participation in international crisis management duties increases security, rather than diminishes it.



Finland's military non-alignment is believed to improve, 45% (38% in 2015), rather than weaken, 18% (23%), security.

Finland's possible NATO membership is regarded as a factor which can either reduce, 36% (36% in year 2015), or increase, 32% (35%), security.

The share of foreign ownership in the Finnish economy is considered to be a factor which worsens, 41% (46% in 2015), rather than improves, 7% (7%), security. Almost one half of the respondents, 45% (42%), say that it has no effect. (Figures 23–26)

### **The UN and the EU are believed to contribute positively to Finland's security, Russia is viewed as a negative influence**

Whereas more than half of the respondents, 61% (64% in 2010), regard that the UN is a positive influence on Finland's security, 27% (22%) opine that it has no effect and 1% (1%) believe it to be a negative influence. Seven per cent (11%) consider it to have both a negative and positive influence.

More than one half, 58% (57% in 2015), of the respondents regard the European Union as a positive influence on Finland's security. Five per cent (7%) believe it to be a negative influence. One fifth, 21% (15%), hold that it has no effect whatsoever on Finland's security. Thirteen per cent (19%) consider it to have both a negative and positive influence.

Thirty-eight per cent (46% in 2015) view the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) as a positive influence on Finland's security or that it has no effect, 33% (25%). Two per cent (2%) believe it to have a negative influence. Eleven per cent (16%) of the respondents consider it to have a negative and positive influence, and almost one fifth of them, 17% (11%), have no opinion.

NATO is believed to have a positive, 26% (21% in 2015), and a negative, 25% (21%), effect on Finland's security. While one fifth, 19% (26%) feel that it does not make any difference, a quarter, 24% (28%), consider it to have both a negative and positive influence.

The United States is believed to have a positive, 21% (14% in 2015), and a negative, 19% (17%), influence on Finland's security. Twenty-eight per cent (33%) consider it to have both a negative and positive influence. One quarter, 26% (33%), feel that it does not make any difference.

One half of the respondents, 50% (28% in 2015), believe that Russia has a negative effect on Finland's security. A quarter, 24% (40%), consider it to have both a negative and positive influence. Fifteen per cent (20%) feel that it does not make any difference, and 6% (9%) believe it to have a positive influence on Finland's security.

While more than half, 55% (54% in 2015), of the respondents do not see China as having any influence on Finland's security, 17% (22%) view China as having a positive and negative influence; 10% (11%) a negative and 8% (7%) a positive influence. (Figures 27 and 28)

## Weakening confidence in the future of the European Union

In 2005, following 10 years of Finland's membership of the European Union, the AB-DI posed the following question: 'How confident are you about the future of the European Union? Has your confidence during the past few years increased, decreased or remained the same?'

The same question was polled again this year because of the internal turbulence within the European Union due to, among other things, the Brexit vote.

Half, 52% (39% in 2005), are of the opinion that their trust in the European Union has diminished. Fifty-seven per cent of men (39%) and 47% of women (38%) feel this way.

Of the Finns Party supporters 69% think like this; 63% (51% in 2005 of the Left Alliance) as do 56% (37%) of the SPD; 53% (36%) of the Green Party; 46% (38%) of the Coalition Party; and 45% (38%) of those of the Centre Party.

Fewer than half, 45% (53% in 2005), of the respondents have retained their confidence in the future of the European Union, 39% (51%) of men and 51% (55%) of women.

This is how 50% (52% in 2005) of the Coalition Party supporters think and 48% (56%) of the Centre Party; 46% (59%) of the Green Party; 43% (54%) of the SDP; 37% (40%) of the Left Alliance; and 29% of the Finns Party supporters.

Two per cent (8% in 2005) of the respondents expressed greater confidence in the European Union, 2% (10%) of men and 1% (5%) of women.

### **Russia's recent activities are still believed to negatively impact Finland's security**

More than half, 59% (57% in 2015), of the respondents evaluate that Russia's recent activities have had a negative effect on Finland's security, 58% (57%) of men and 61% (57%) of women take this view, as do 77% (63%) of the Coalition Party; 69% (64%) of the Green Party; 57% (59%) of the Centre Party; 56% (56%) of the SDP; 50% (42%) of the Left Alliance; and 43% (56%) of the Finns Party supporters.

A little more than a third, 35% (37% in 2015) hold that Russia's recent activities have neither a negative nor positive effect on Finland's security, 37% (38%) of men and 32% (36%) of women feel so. Fifty-six per cent (42%) of the Finns Party supporters have this opinion as do 47% (51%) of the Left Alliance; 41% (40%) of the SDP; 34% (34%) of the Centre Party; 28% (32%) of the Green Party; and 21% (32%) of the Coalition Party supporters.

Two per cent (3% in 2015) of the respondents see Russia's activities in a positive light vis-à-vis Finland's security. (Figure 30)

### **Compared to men, women still envisage the future as more insecure**

More than half, 59% (65% in 2015), believe that Finland and Finns will live in a more insecure world for the next five years, 53% (62%) of men and 66% (68%) of women think so. While the sense of insecurity has declined since 2015, it is still the second-highest of the entire timeline.

Roughly one fifth, 27% (23% in 2015), see no difference to the present situation, 29% (25%) of men and 24% (21%) of women think this way.

Thirteen per cent (10% in 2015) believe in a more secure future, 17% (11%) of men and 10% (9%) of women. When it comes to different age groups, this view is shared by 19% (18%) of those under 25 years of age; 15% (8%) of the 25–34 year olds; and 10% (6%) of the 50–79 year olds. (Figures 31 and 32)

## **The global refugee situation and Finland's employment situation cause the greatest concern**

Since 2004 the ABDI has asked whether a number of phenomena and factors pose much, some, little or no concern at all about the future. The list included 18 factors of which the global refugee situation, political extremism, racism, the situation in Turkey, the number of asylum seekers in Finland and social inequality in Finland were new ones.

The global refugee situation rose to the top (85%) as an issue of concern. However, the respondents considered the number of asylum seekers in Finland (61%) as a smaller concern.

*Factors causing much or some concern, listed in the order of magnitude:*

The global refugee situation (85%); the employment situation in Finland 84% (87% in 2015); prospects for the European economy 75% (79%); international terrorism 75% (83%); political extremism 74%; the situation in Syria 73% (72%); Russia's development 72% (69%); climate change 71% (72% global warming); racism 70%; social inequality in Finland 69%; security in the Baltic Sea region 66%; proliferation of weapons of mass destruction 64%; religious extremism 62%; the growing numbers of migrants in Finland 61%; the number of asylum seekers in Finland 61% (67%); cyber threats 60% (62%); the situation in Ukraine 59% (56%); and the situation in Turkey 57%. (Figures 33–37)

## Preparedness for different kinds of threats

Since 2007 the ABDI has polled the following question: 'In your opinion, how well has Finland prepared for the following threats?'

This year the list included 13 different threats, 11 of which having been included in every year's survey as well as economic pressure from abroad since 2014 and the economic crisis since 2012.

### *Well or rather well prepared for:*

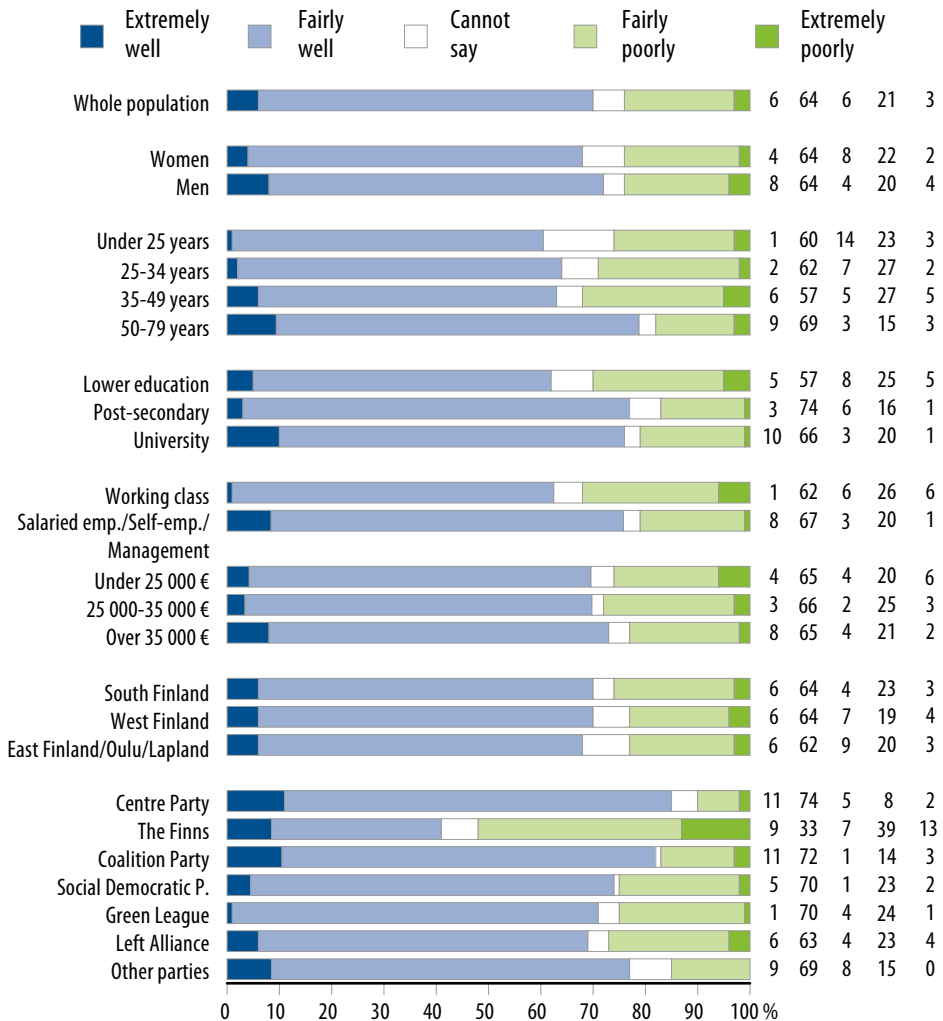
Contagious diseases, epidemics 84% (84% in 2015), Various environmental threats 80% (79%), Disasters / Major accidents 80% (80%), Military/armed attack 70% (63%), Access to energy 65% (66%), Terrorism 59% (53), Climate change 57% (53), Political pressure from abroad 52% (48), International crime 51% (53), Cyber-attacks 51% (55%).

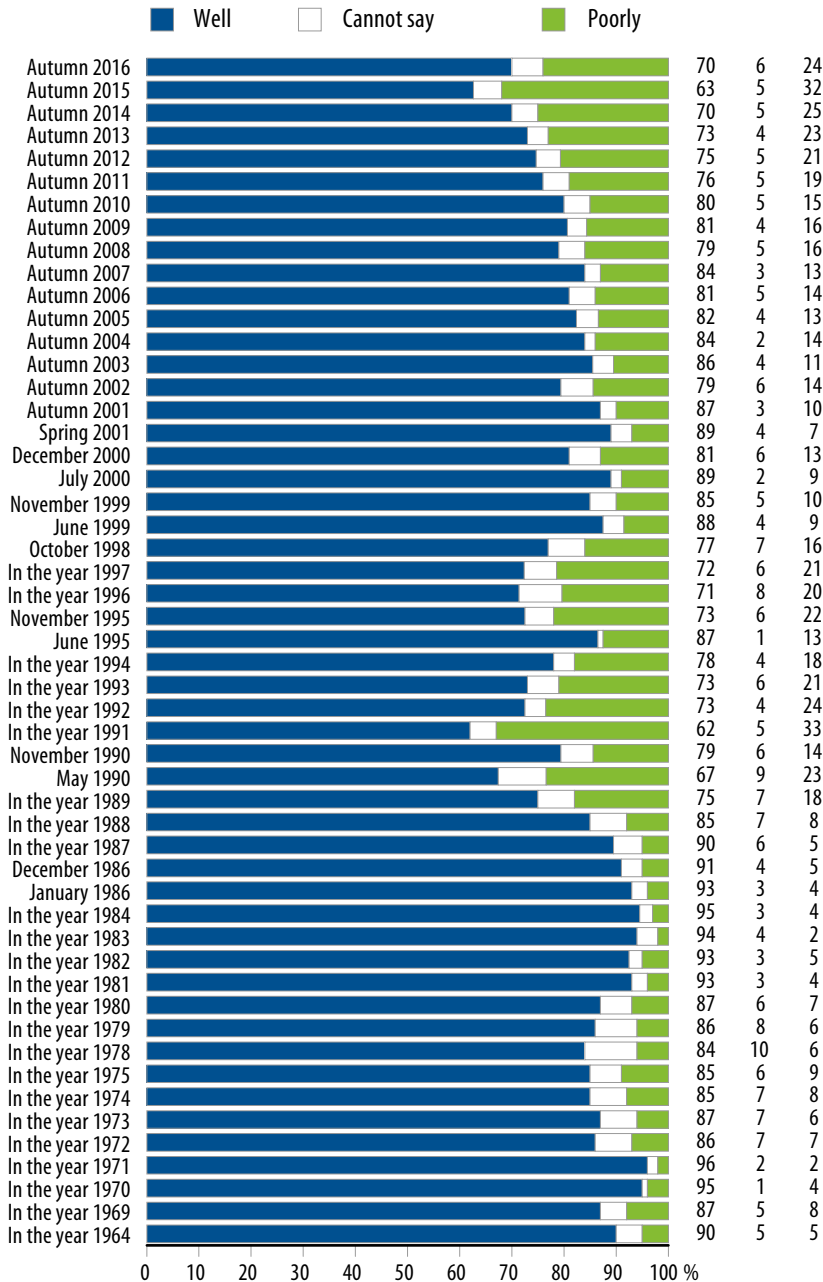
### *Poorly or very poorly prepared for:*

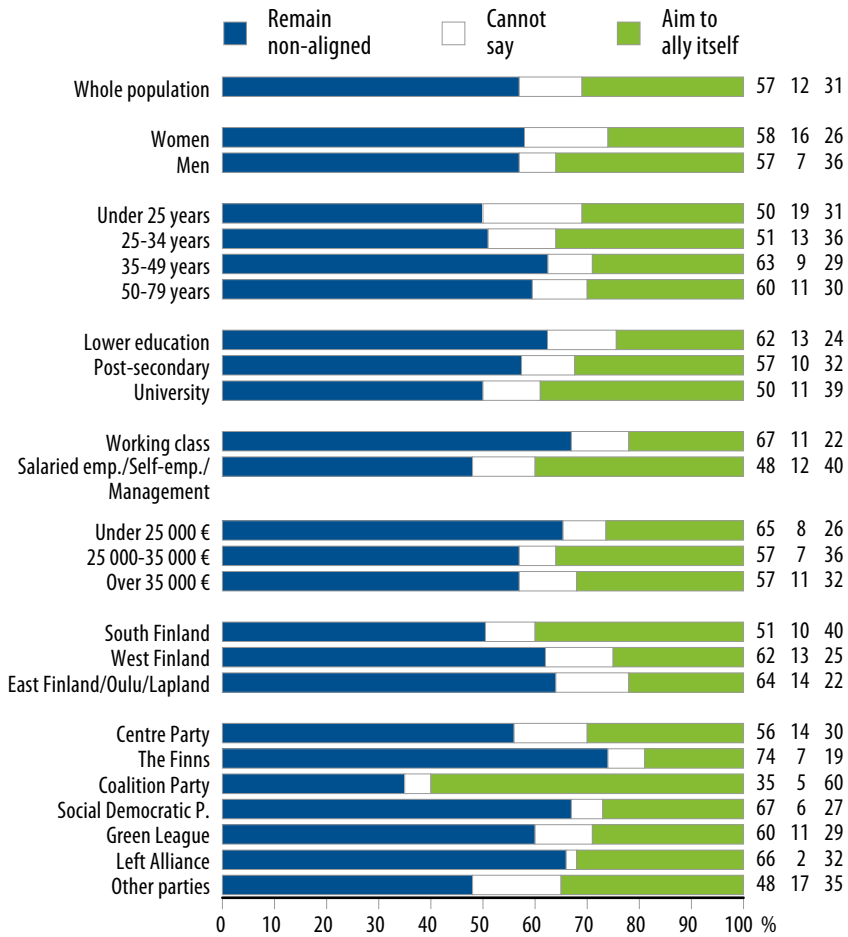
Economic crisis 61% (70%), Uncontrolled migration 59% (67%)

### *Both well and poorly prepared for:*

Economic pressure from abroad; poorly 46% (47), well 44% (43%). (Figures 38–41)

**Figure 1. The conduct of Finnish foreign policy***"In your opinion, how well or how poorly has Finnish foreign policy been conducted in recent years?"*

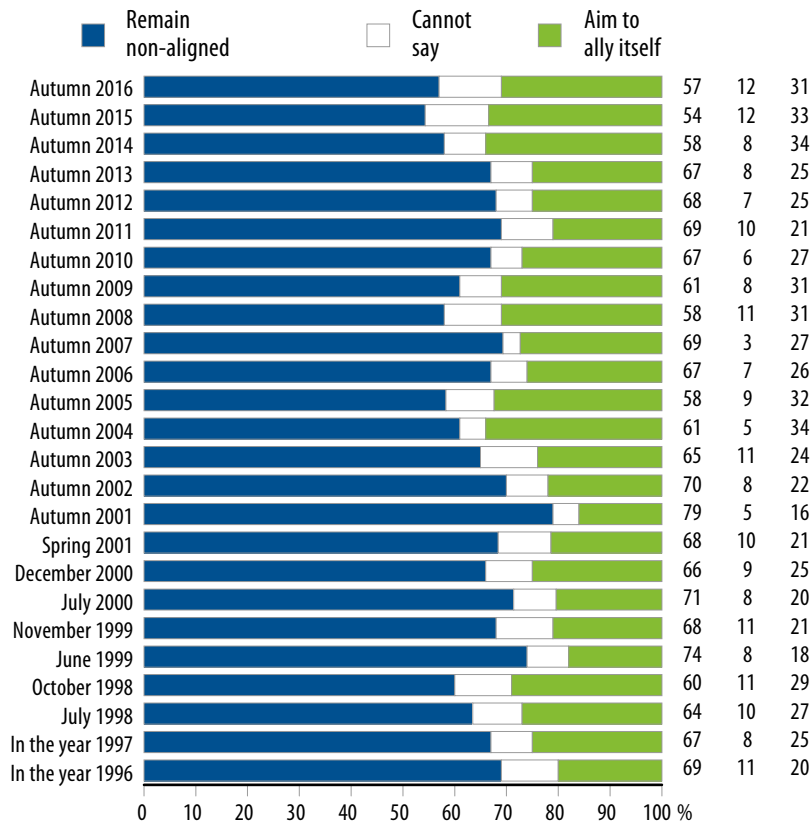
**Figure 2. The conduct of Finnish foreign policy***"In your opinion, how well or how poorly has Finnish foreign policy been conducted in recent years?"*

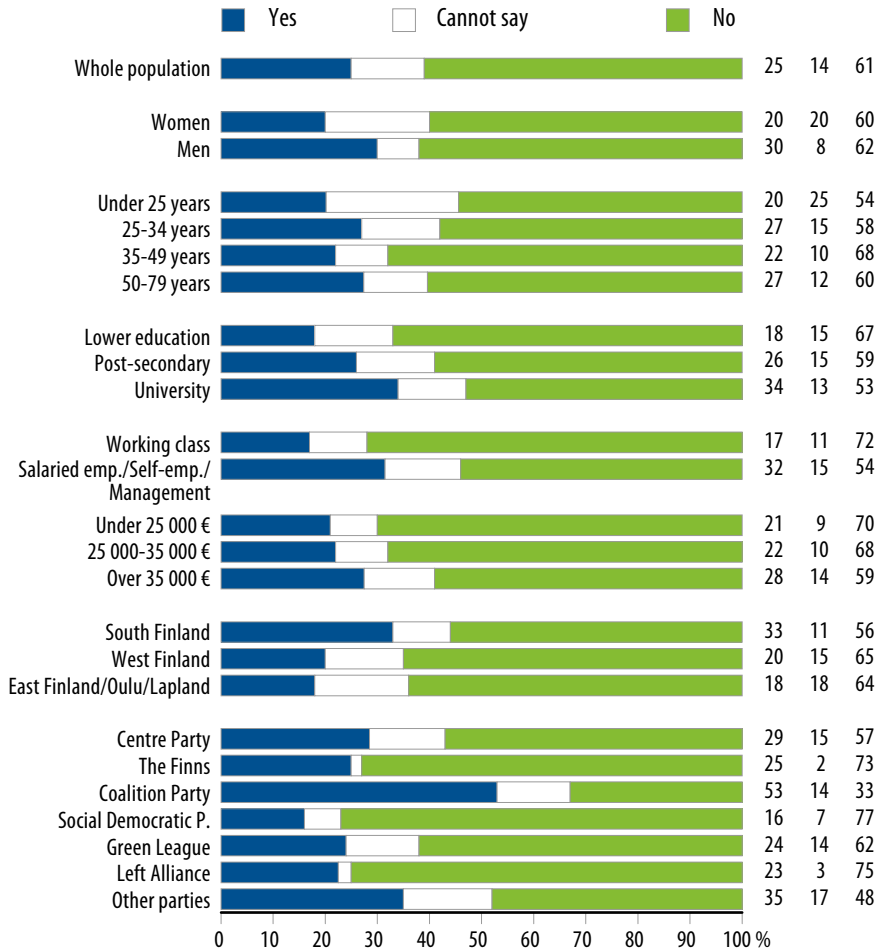
**Figure 3. Military alignment or non-alignment***"In your opinion, should Finland remain militarily non-aligned or should Finland aim to ally itself militarily?"*

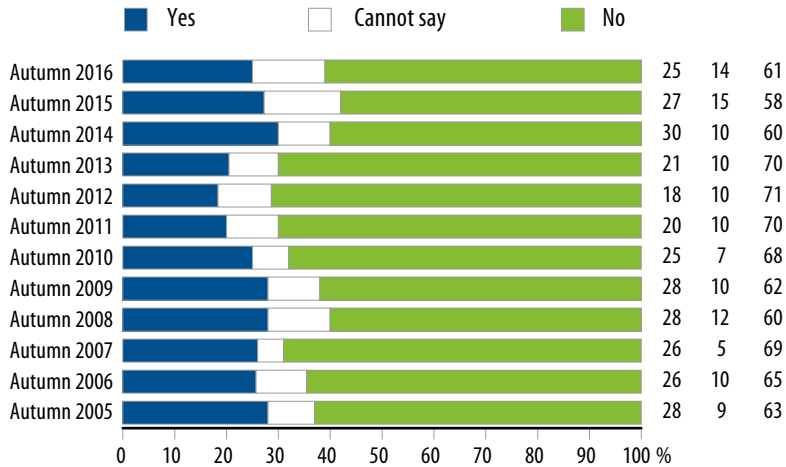


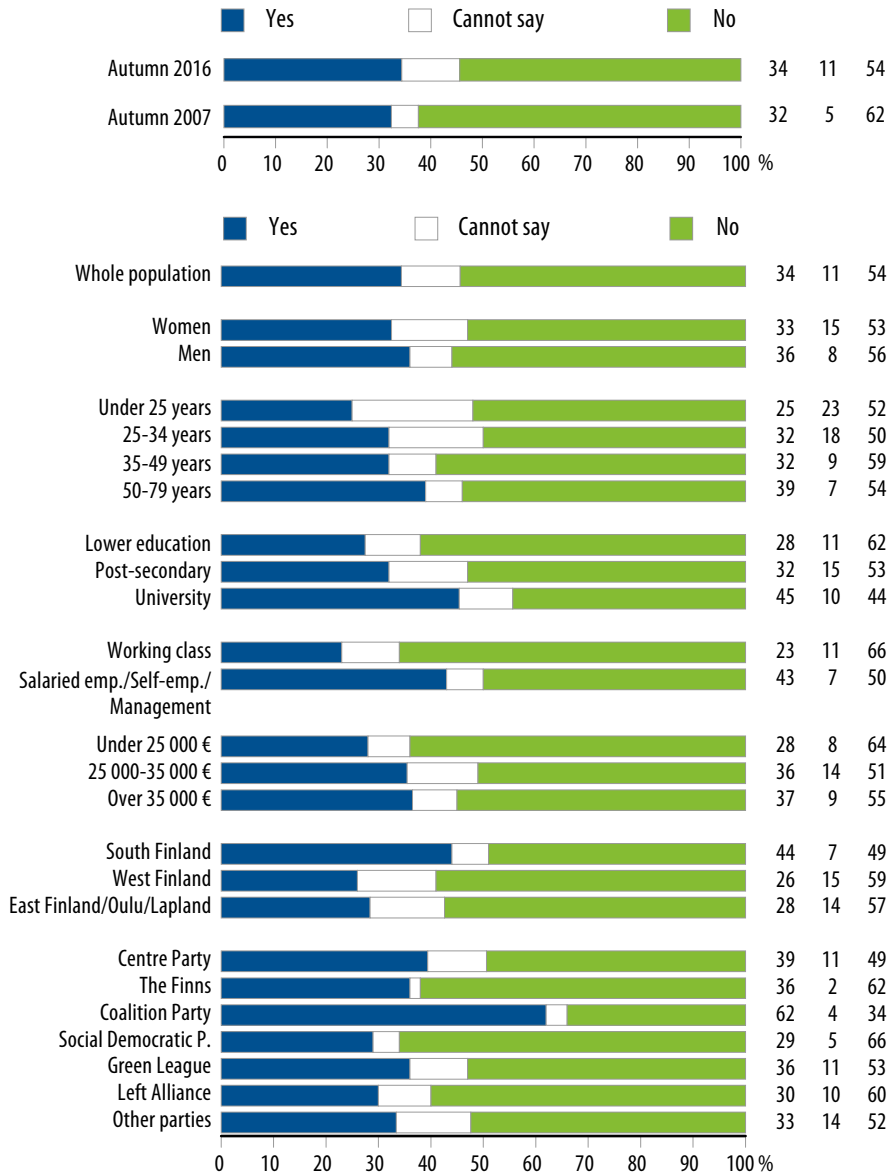
**Figure 4. Military alignment or non-alignment**

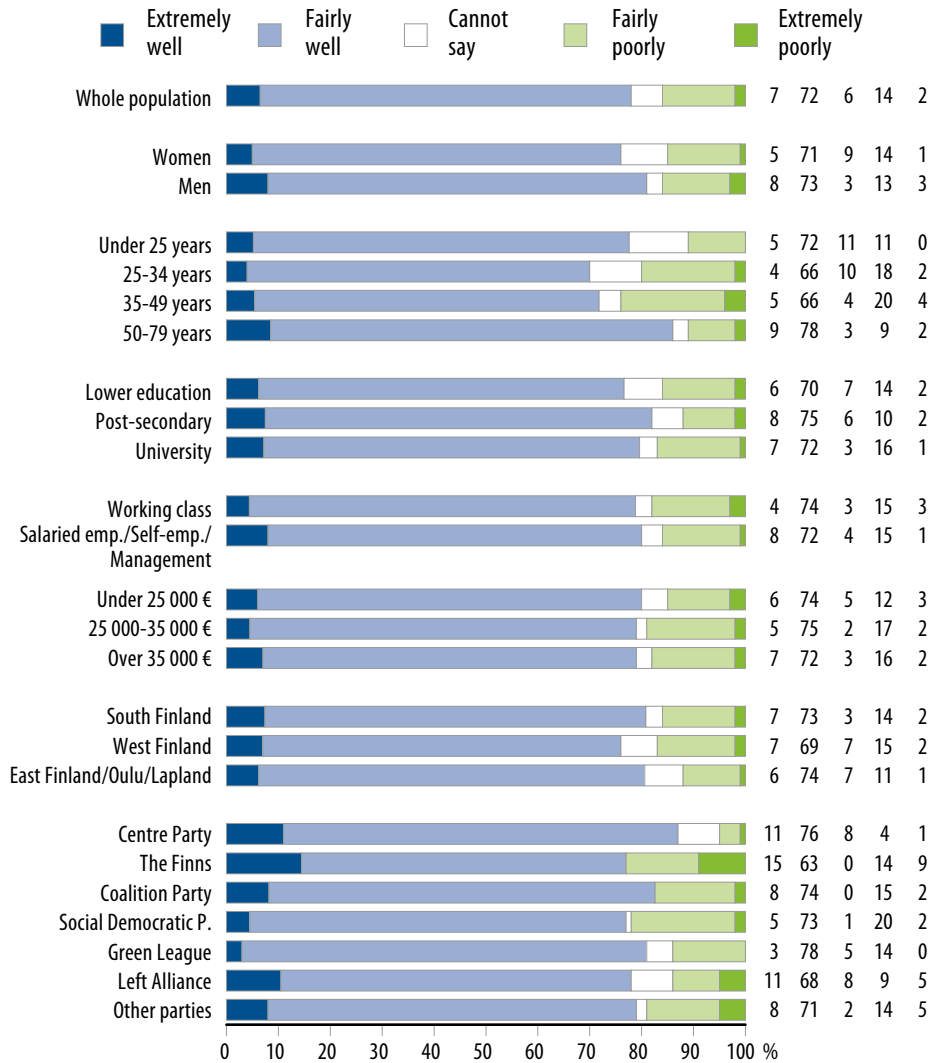
*"In your opinion, should Finland remain militarily non-aligned or should Finland aim to ally itself militarily?"*

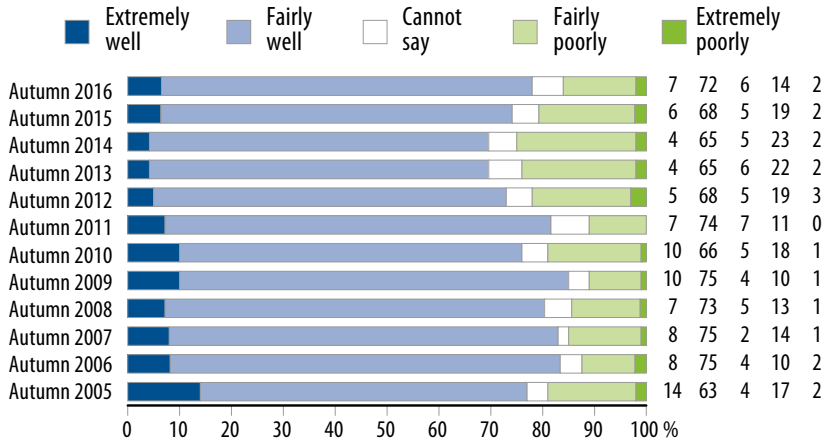


**Figure 5. Nato membership***"In your opinion, should Finland seek membership in Nato?"*

**Figure 6. Nato membership***"In your opinion, should Finland seek membership in Nato?"*

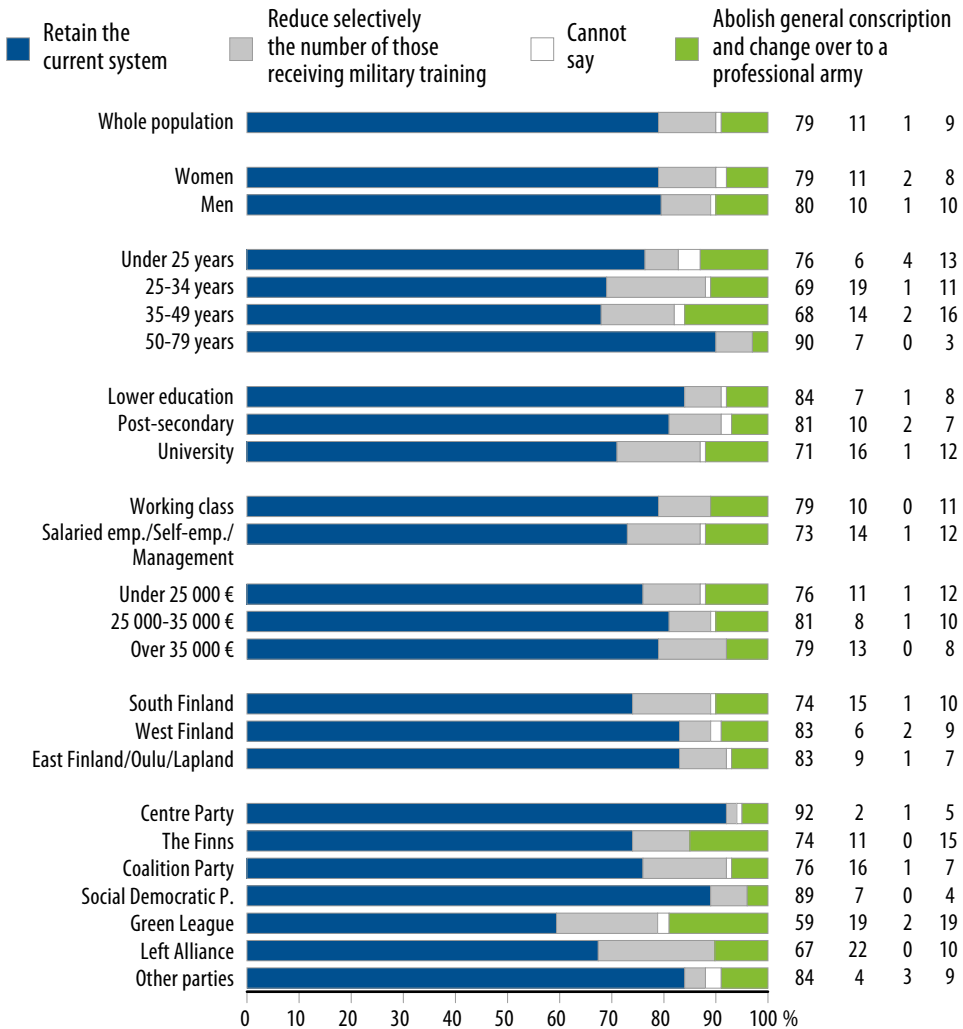
**Figure 7. The impact of Sweden on Finland's relation to Nato***"Should Finland seek Nato membership if Sweden decided to join Nato?"*

**Figure 8. The conduct of defence policy in Finland***"In your opinion, how well or how poorly has Finland's defence policy been conducted in recent years?"*

**Figure 9. The conduct of defence policy in Finland***"In your opinion, how well or how poorly has Finland's defence policy been conducted in recent years?"*

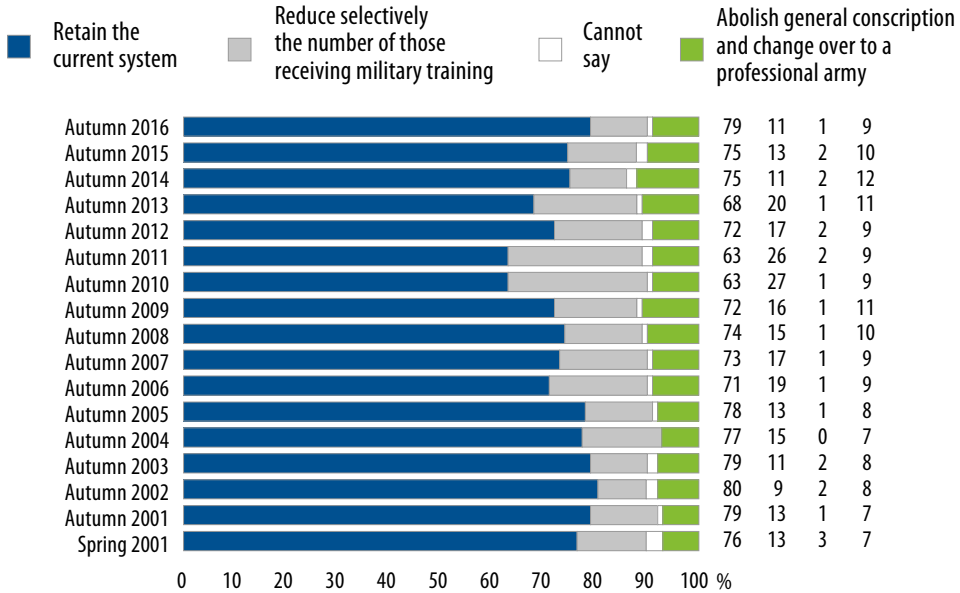
**Figure 10. General conscription**

*"Based on a general, compulsory military service for men, Finnish military defence provides military training for as many of the same age group as possible, thus producing a large reserve personnel. Should the current system be retained or should we change over to a selective conscript service where only a part of the same age group receives military training? Or should we change over to a professional army?"*

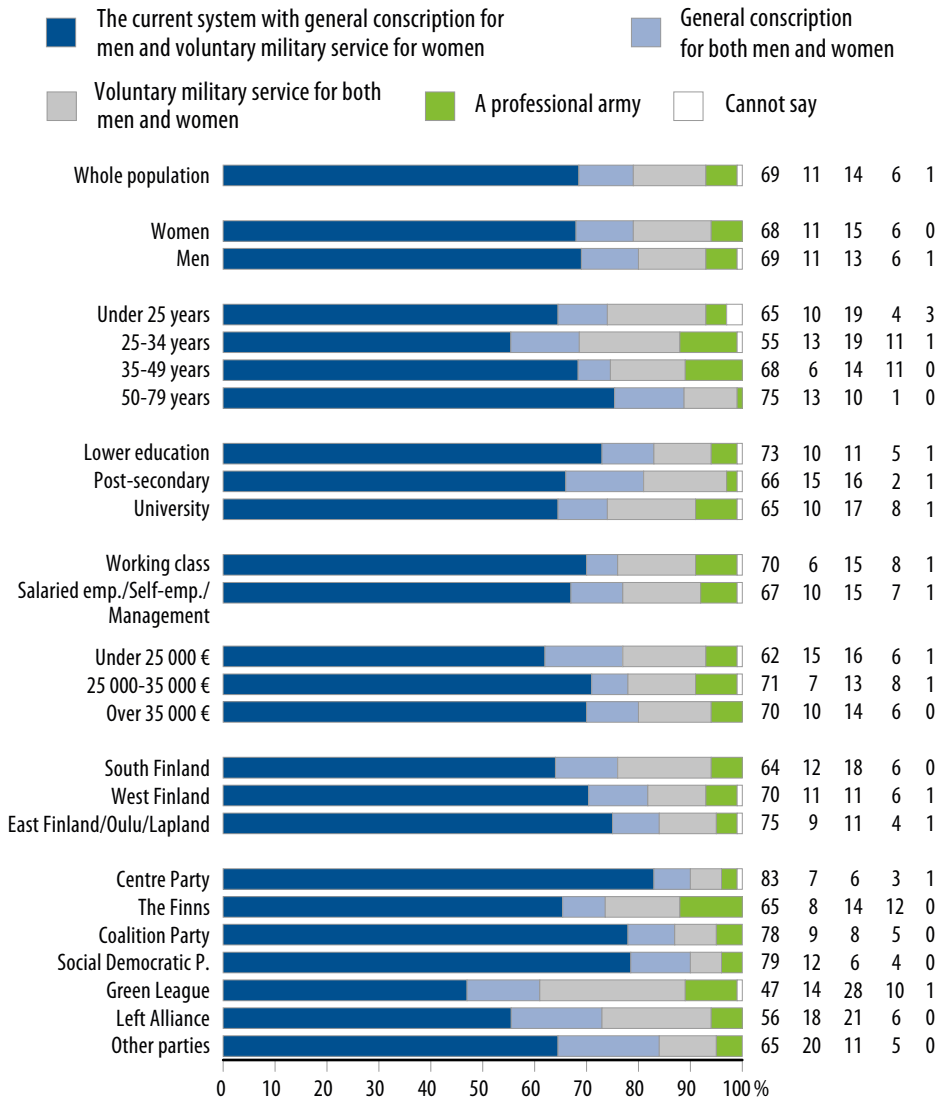


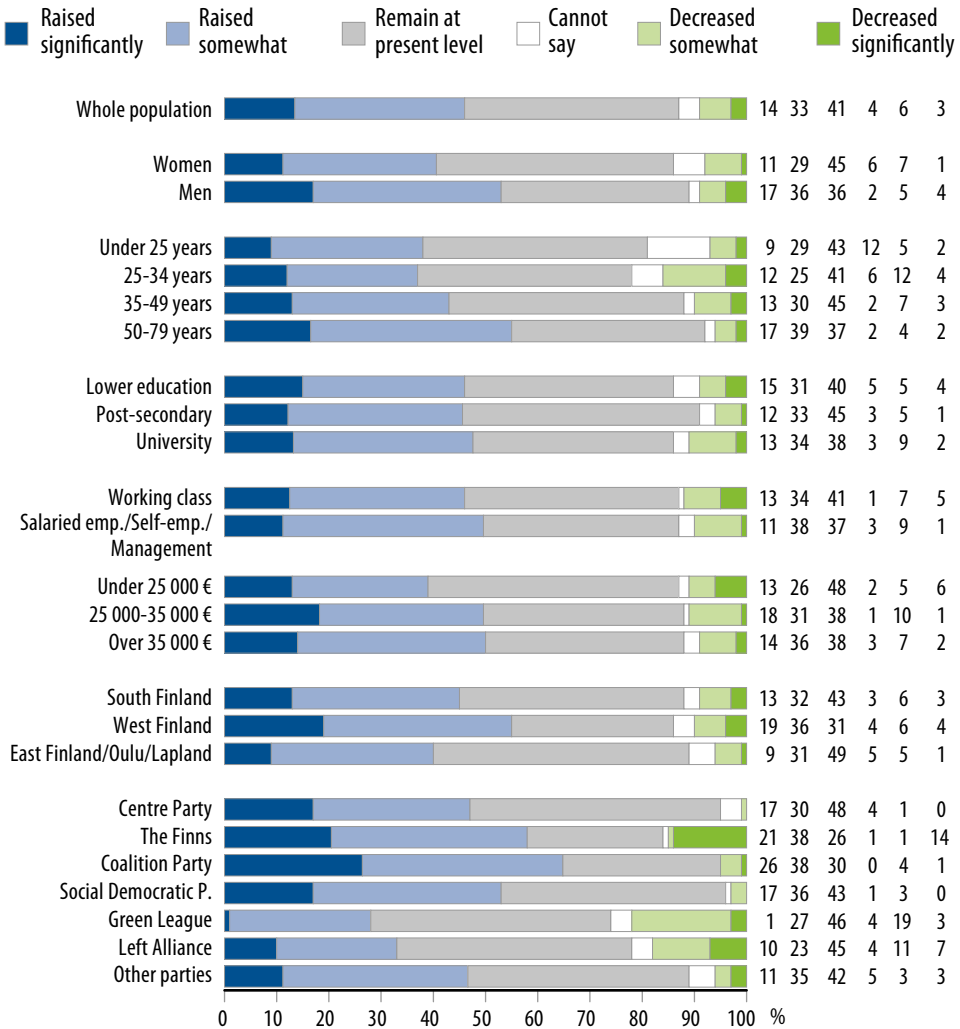
**Figur 11. General conscription**

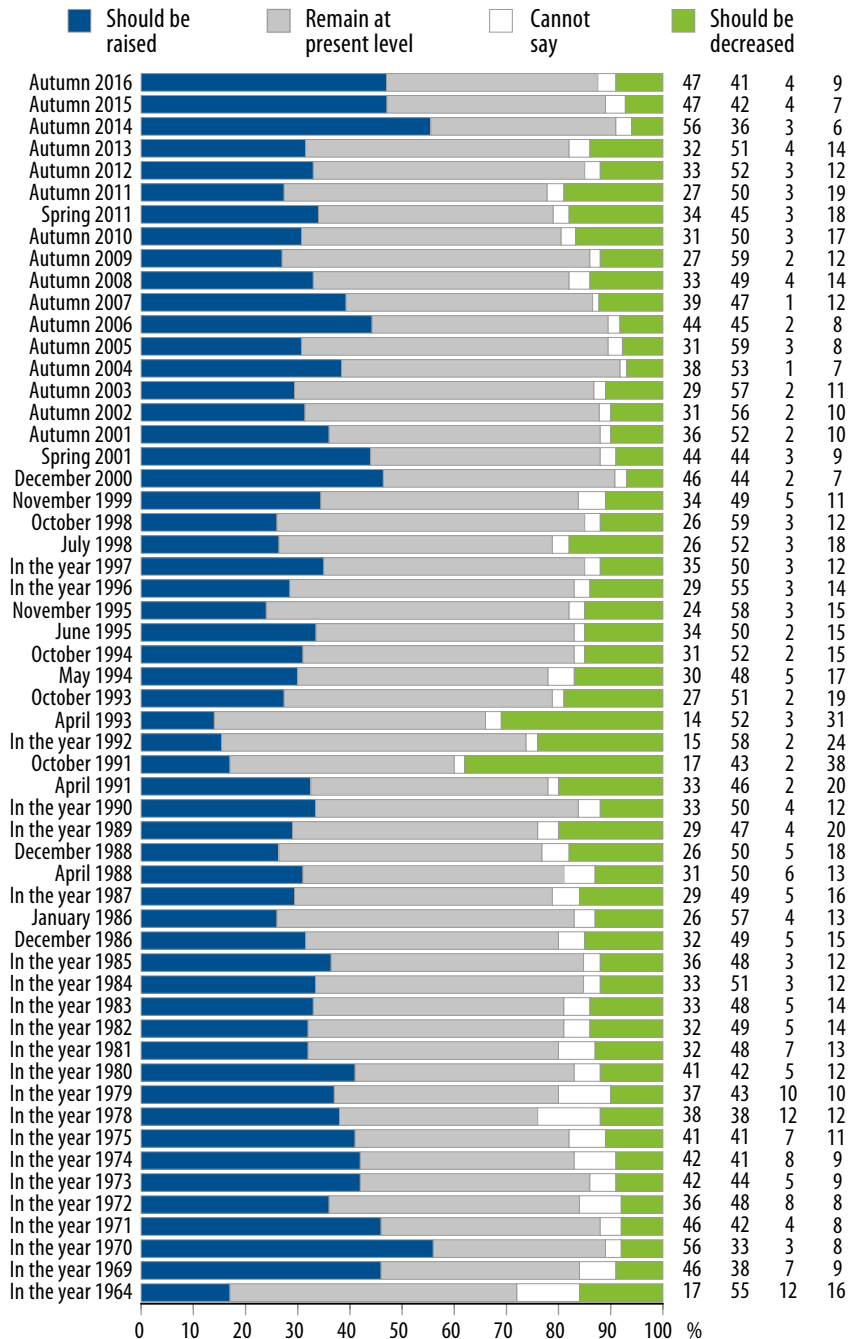
*"Based on a general, compulsory military service for men, Finnish military defence provides military training for as many of the same age group as possible, thus producing a large reserve personnel. Should the current system be retained or should we change over to a selective conscript service where only a part of the same age group receives military training? Or should we change over to a professional army?"*





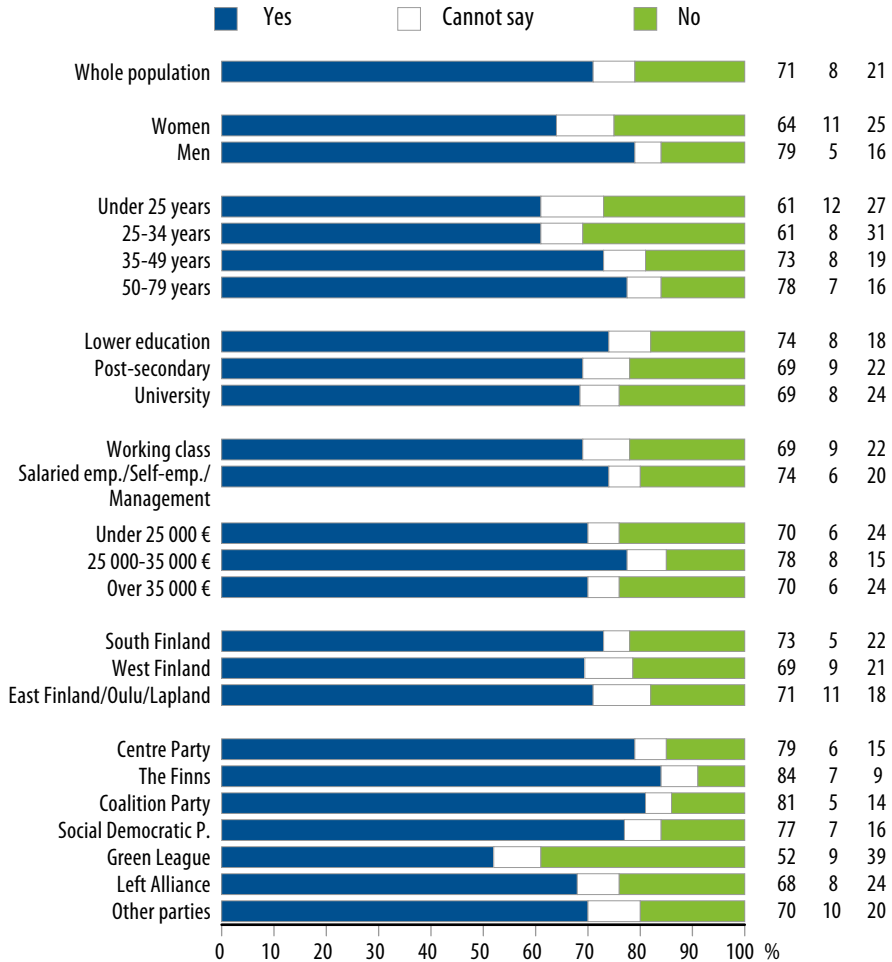
**Figure 12. Finland's defence system***"In your view, should Finland's defence system be based on..."*

**Figure 13. Defence appropriations***"What is your opinion on funds allocated to the Defence Forces?"*

**Figure 14. Defence appropriations***"What is your opinion on funds allocated to the Defence Forces?"*

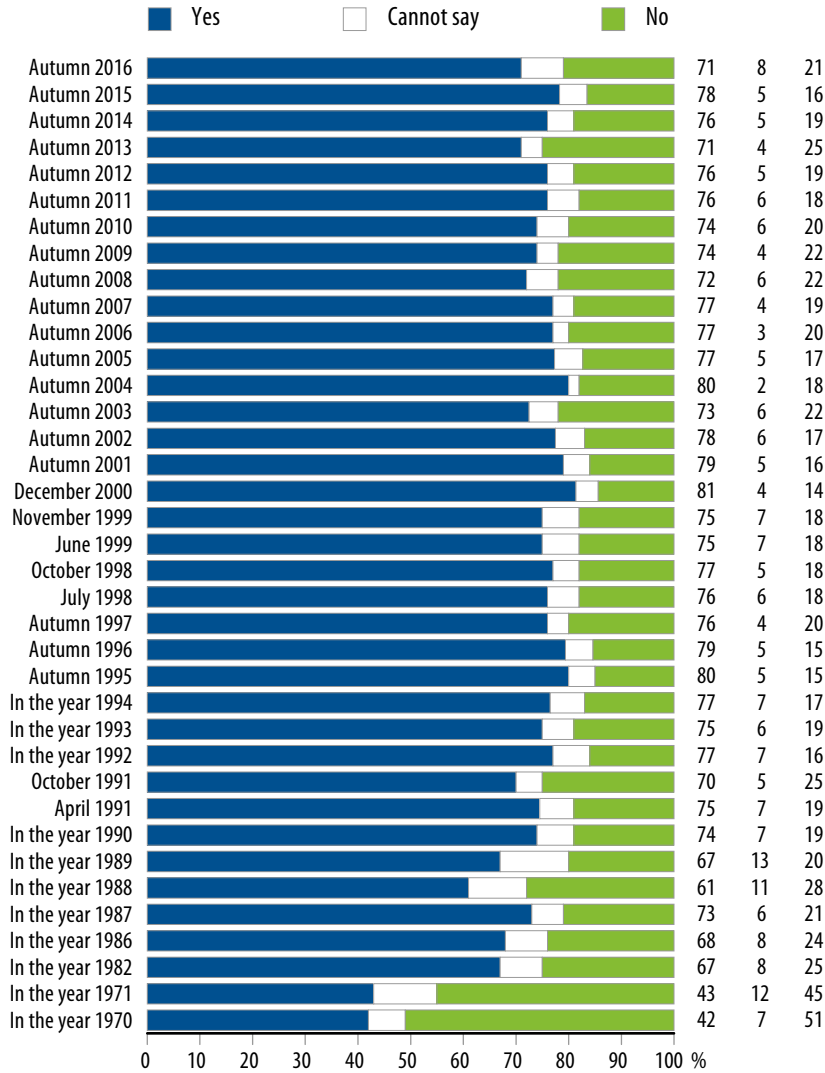
**Figure 15. The will to defend the nation**

*"If Finland were attacked, should Finns, in your opinion, take up arms to defend themselves in all situations, even if the outcome seemed uncertain?"*



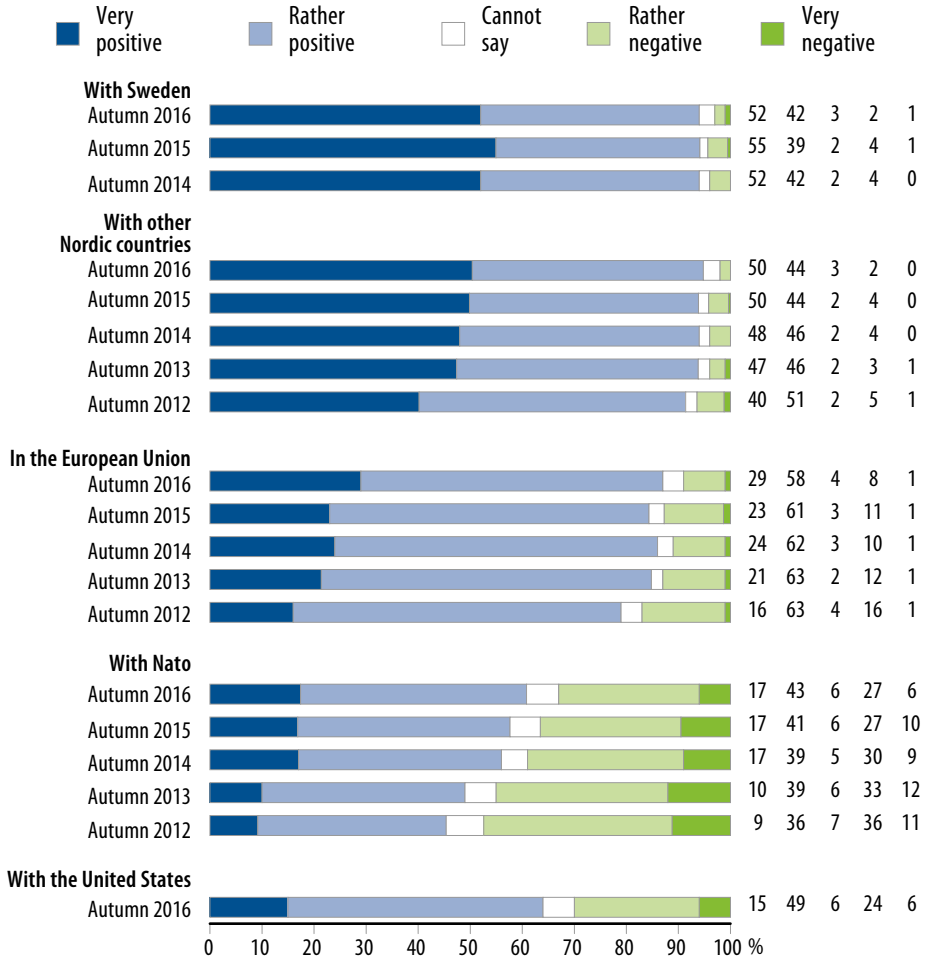
**Figure 16. The will to defend the nation**

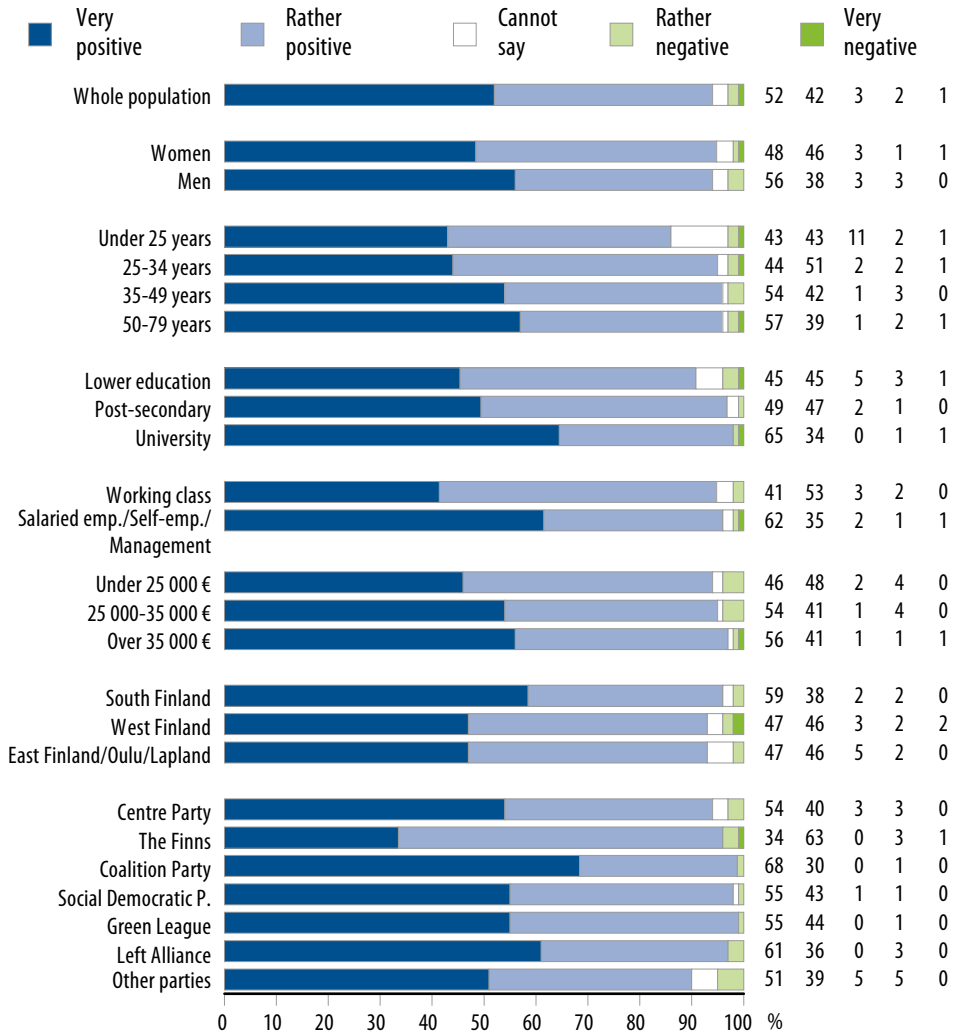
*"If Finland were attacked, should Finns, in your opinion, take up arms to defend themselves in all situations, even if the outcome seemed uncertain?"*

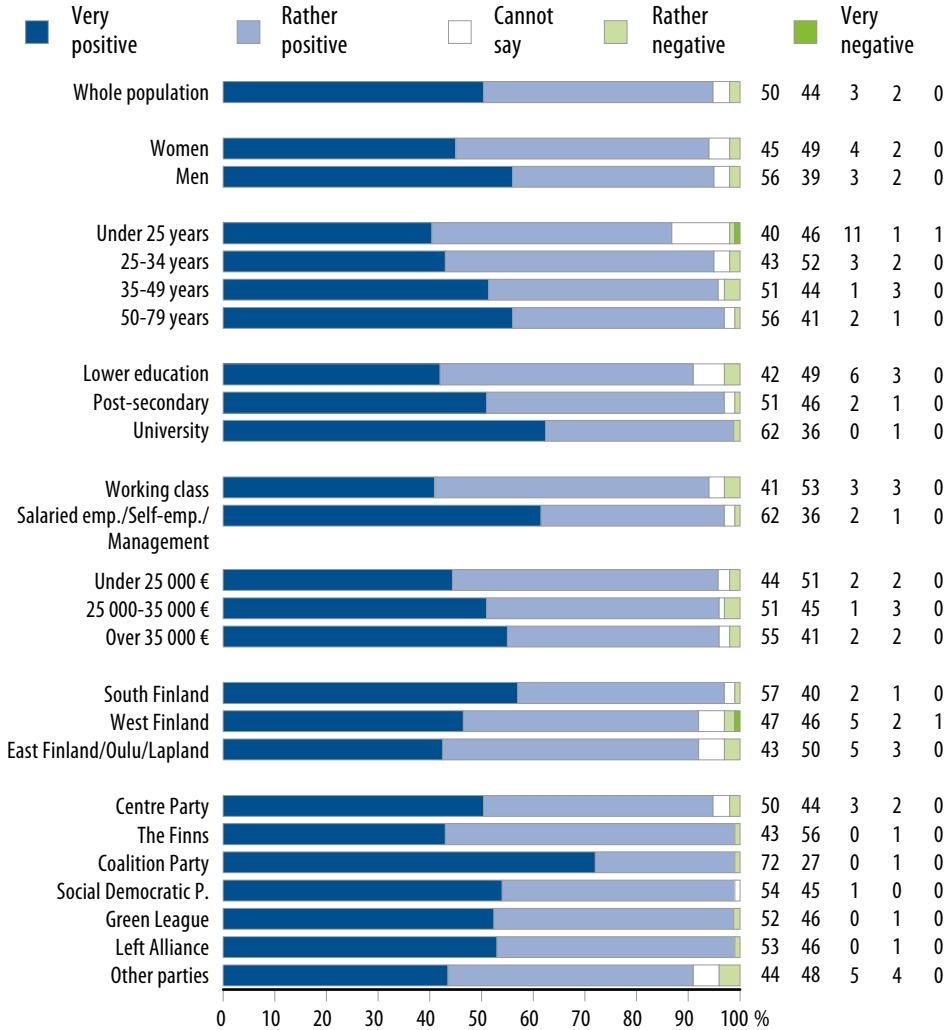


**Figure 17. Military cooperation**

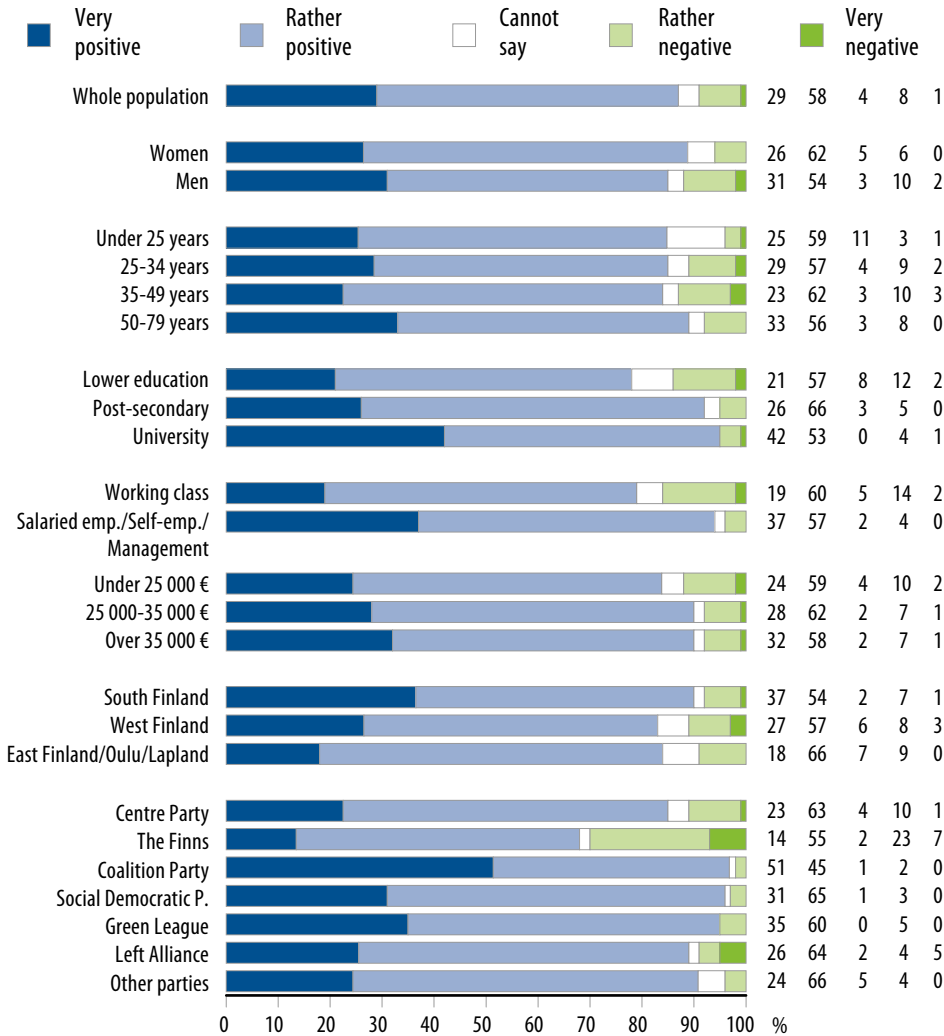
*"Finland conducts military cooperation with other Nordic countries, Nato and the European Union.  
What is your view on cooperation?"*



**Figure 18. Military cooperation with Sweden***"Finland conducts military cooperation with Sweden. What is your view on cooperation?"*

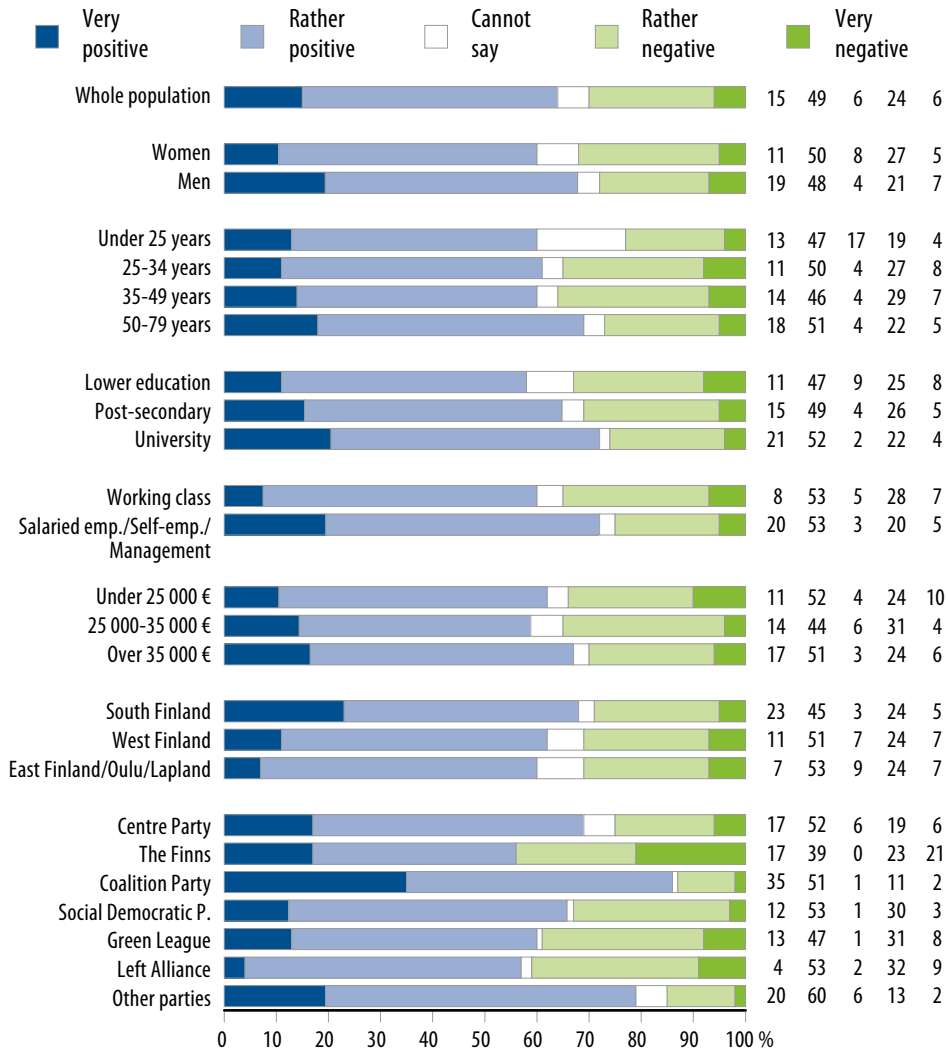
**Figure 19. Military cooperation with other Nordic countries***"Finland conducts military cooperation with other Nordic countries. What is your view on cooperation?"*

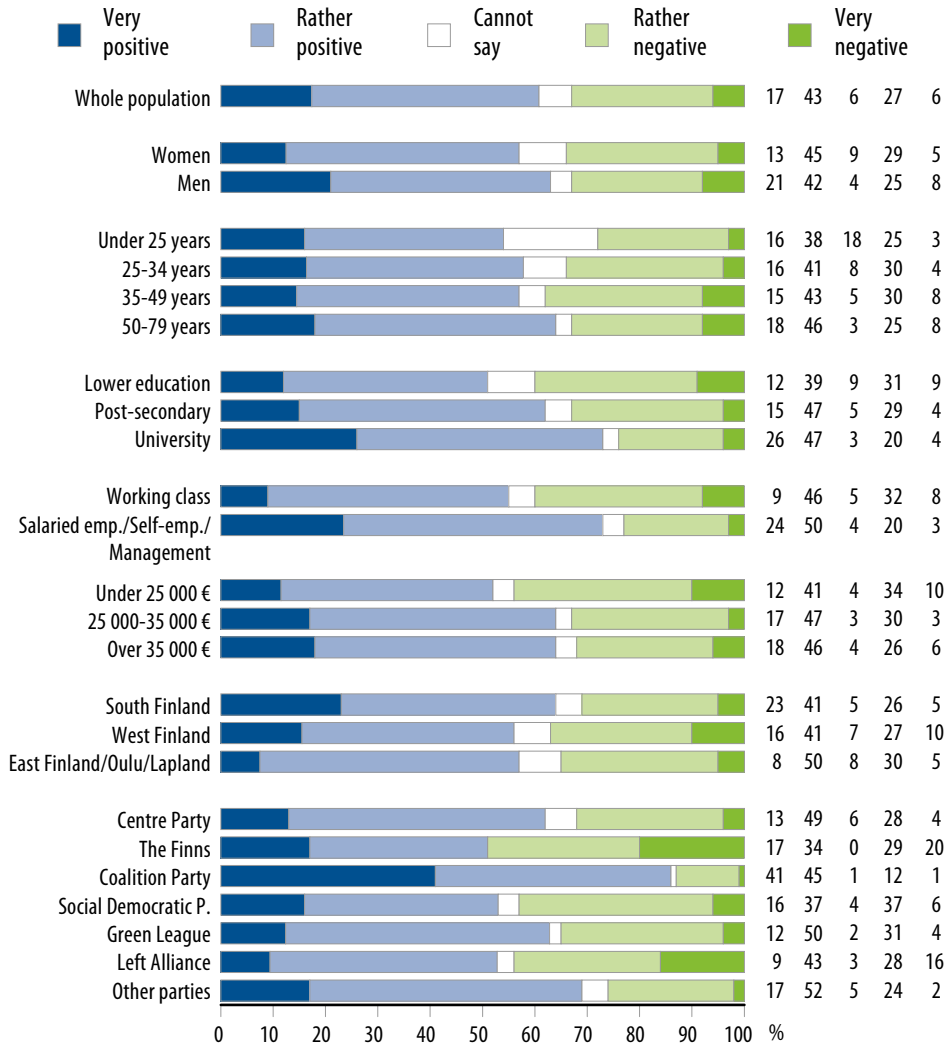


**Figure 20. Military cooperation in the European Union***"Finland conducts military cooperation with the European union. What is your view on cooperation?"*

## Figure 21. Military cooperation with the United States

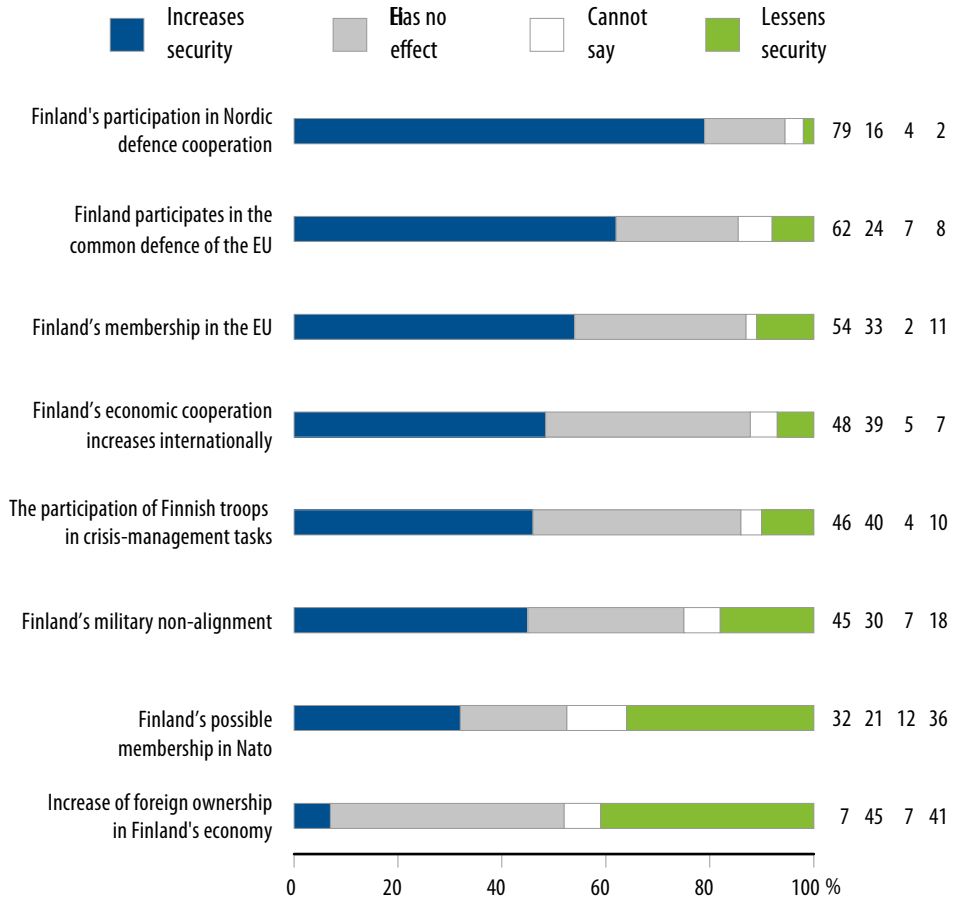
*"Finland conducts military cooperation with the United States. What is your view on cooperation?"*



**Figure 22. Military cooperation with Nato***"Finland conducts military cooperation with Nato. What is your view on cooperation?"*

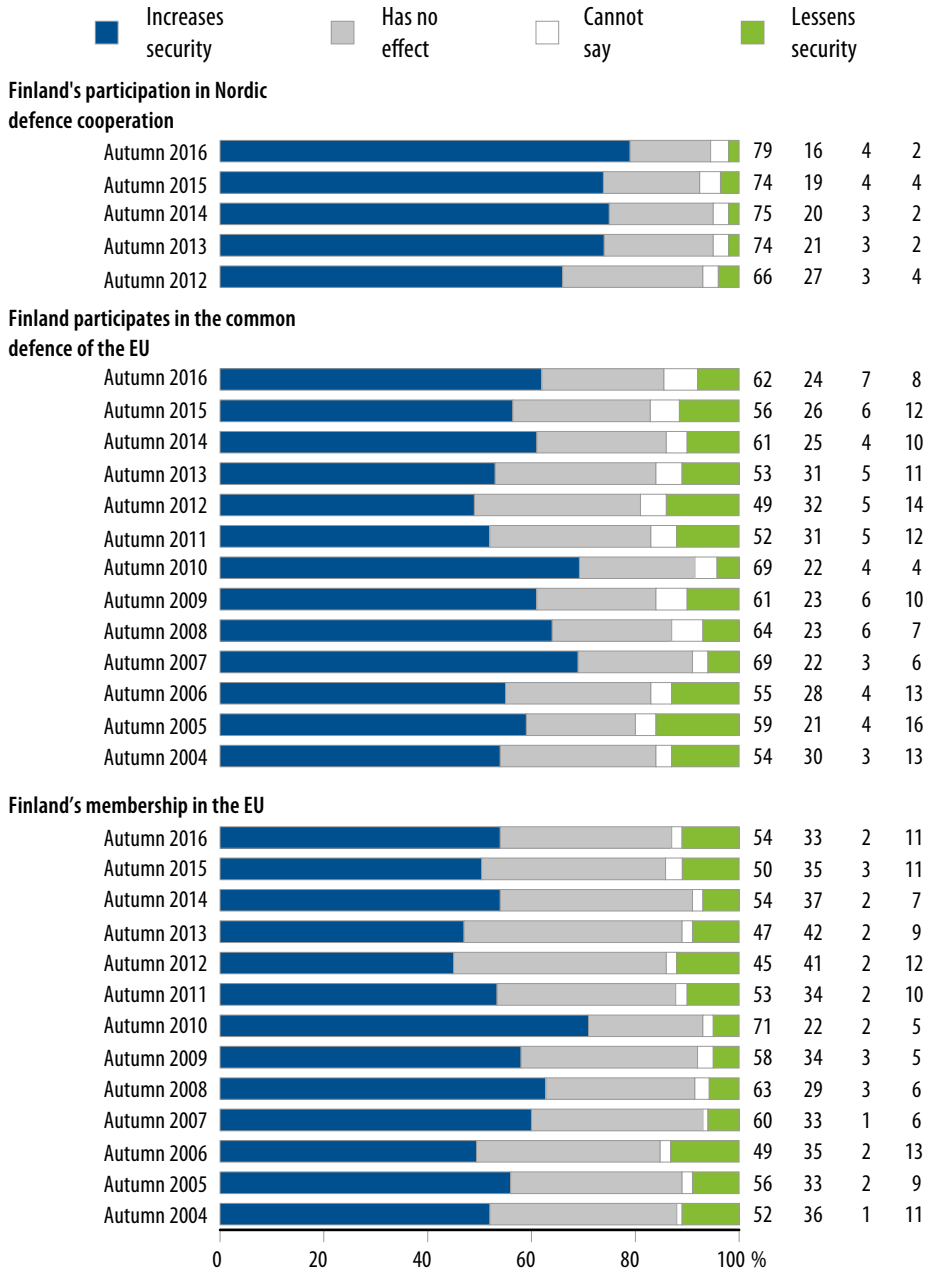
**Figure 23. Factors affecting security**

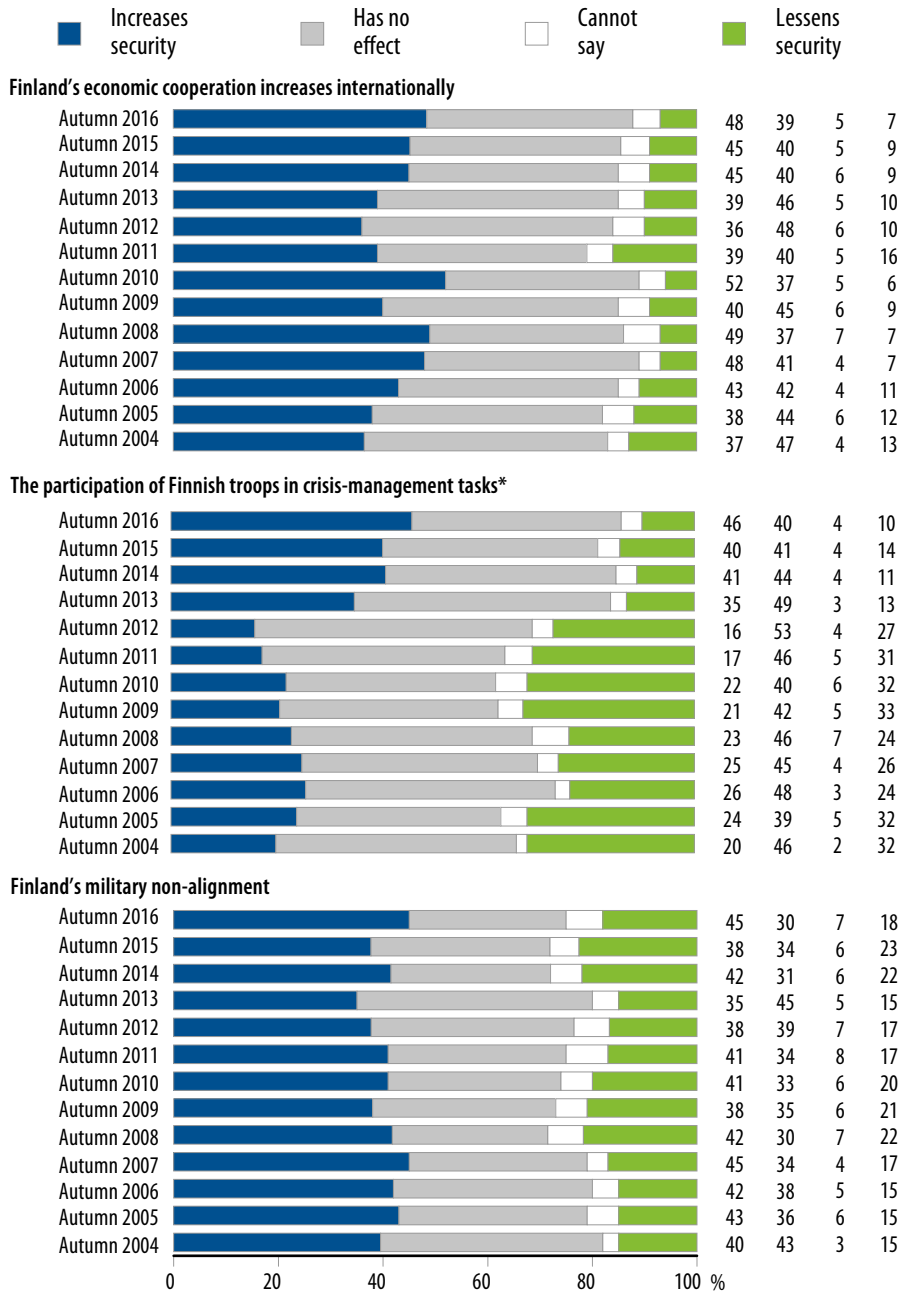
*"How do you assess the following phenomena and factors? How do they affect the security of Finland and Finns?"*



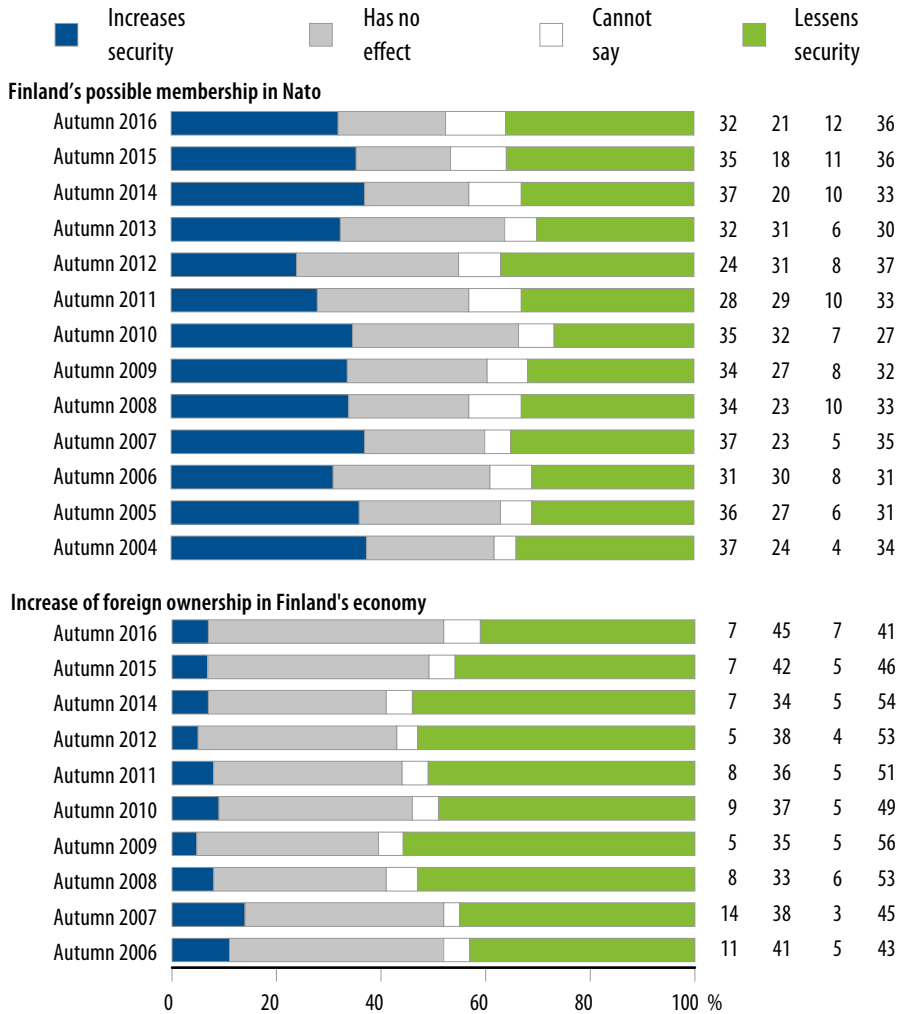
**Figure 24. Factors affecting security (I)**

*"How do you assess the following phenomena and factors? How do they affect the security of Finland and Finns?"*



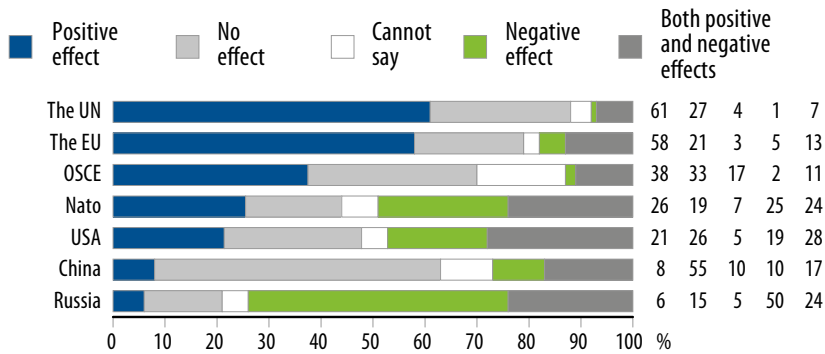
**Figure 25. Factors affecting security (II)***"How do you assess the following phenomena and factors? How do they affect the security of Finland and Finns?"*

\*) 2004-2012 The participation of Finnish troops in crisis-management tasks in war zones

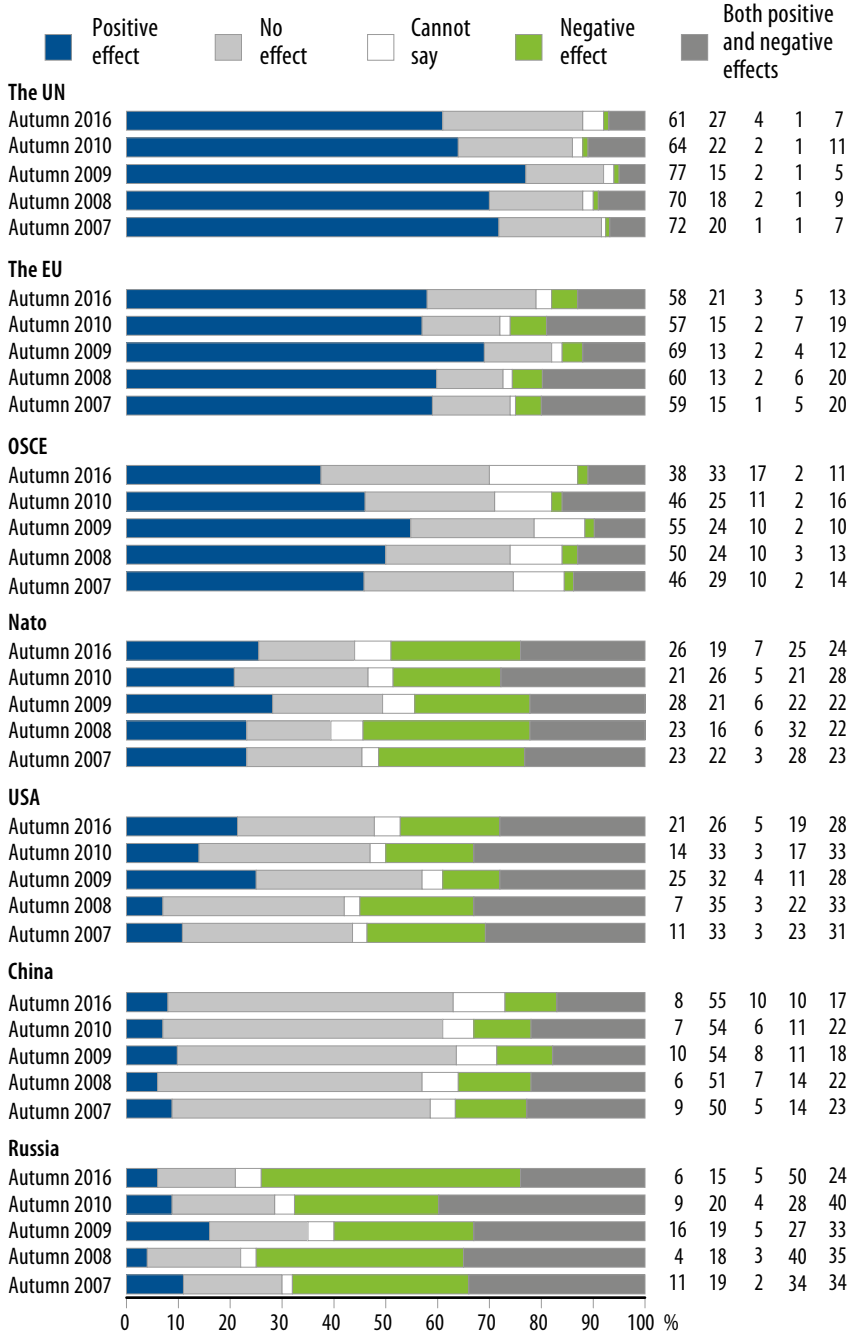
**Figure 26. Factors affecting security (III)***"How do you assess the following phenomena and factors? How do they affect the security of Finland and Finns?"*

**Figure 27. Factors affecting Finland’s security**

*"How do you assess the impact of the following factors on Finland's security?"*

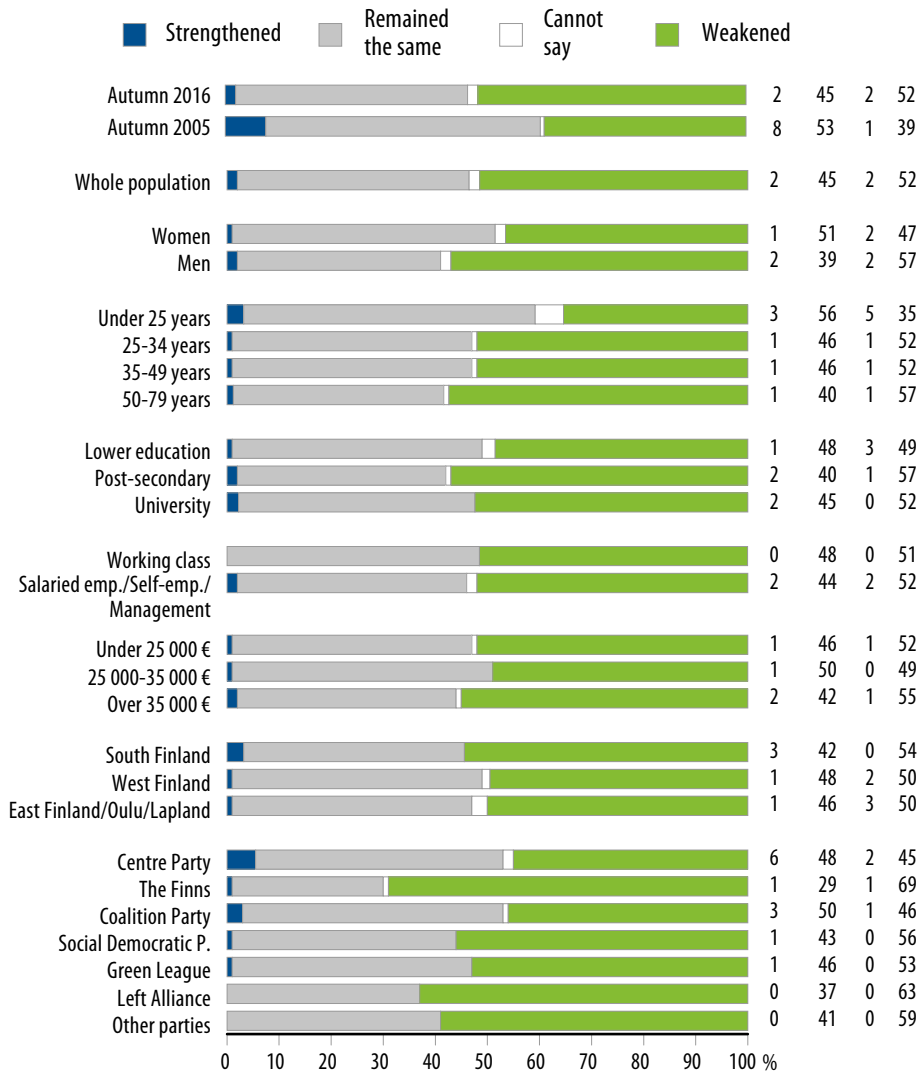




**Figur 28. Factors affecting Finland's security***"How do you assess the impact of the following factors on Finland's security?"*

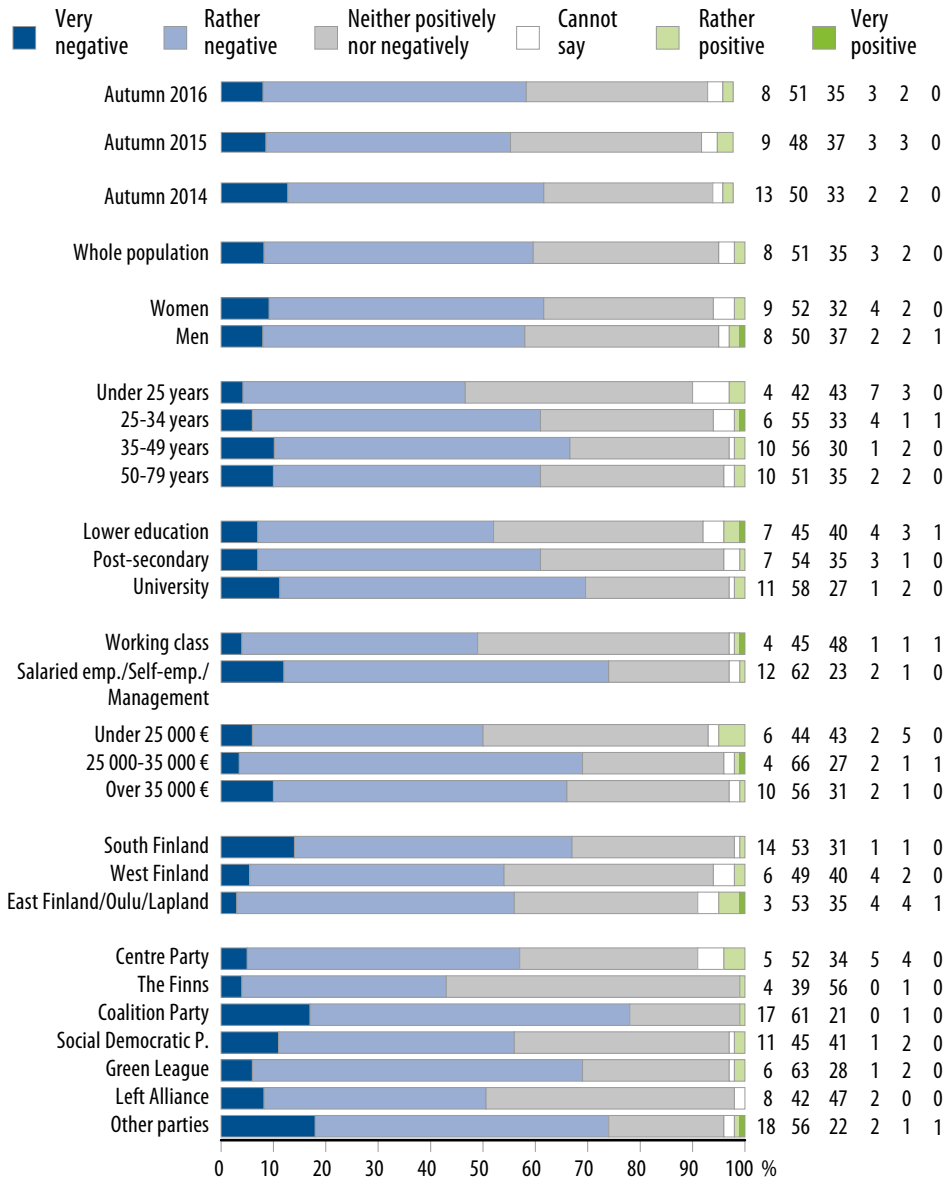
**Figure 29. Confidence in the future of the European Union**

*"What kind of confidence do you have in the future of the European Union? In the last two years, has your confidence been strengthened, weakened or has it remained the same?"*



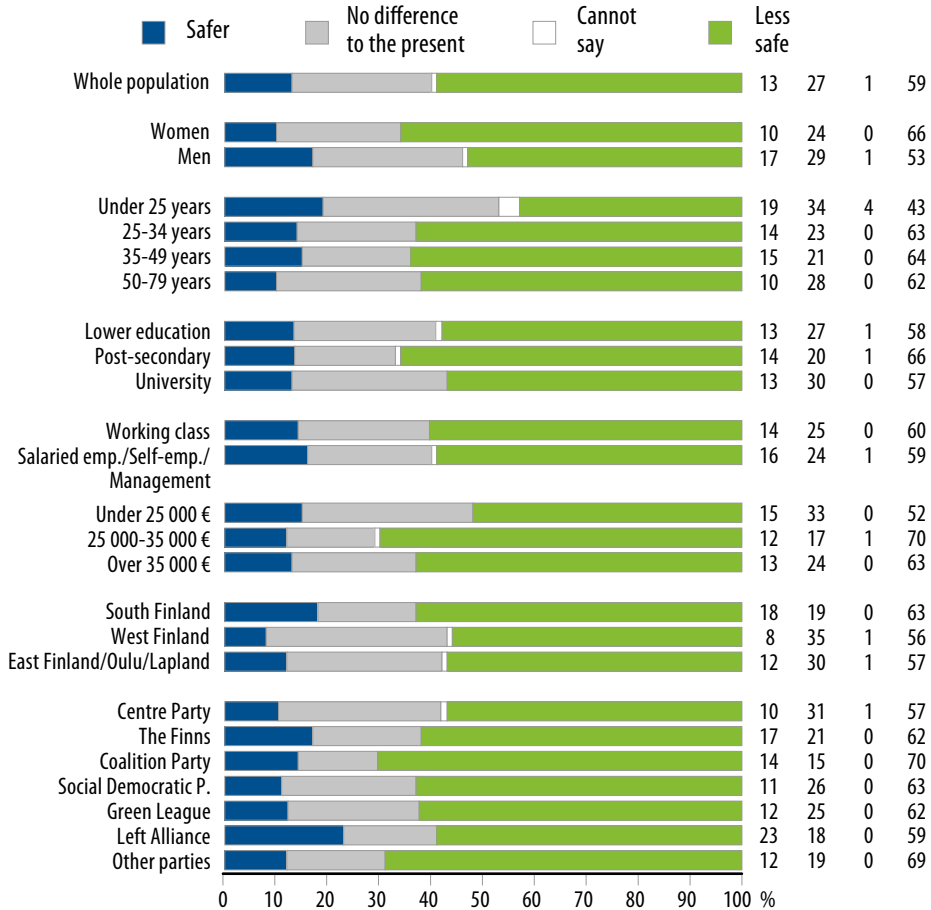
**Figure 30. The impact of Russia's recent activities on Finland's security**

*"In your opinion, how have Russia's recent activities impacted Finland's security? Russia's recent activities have impacted Finland's security..."*



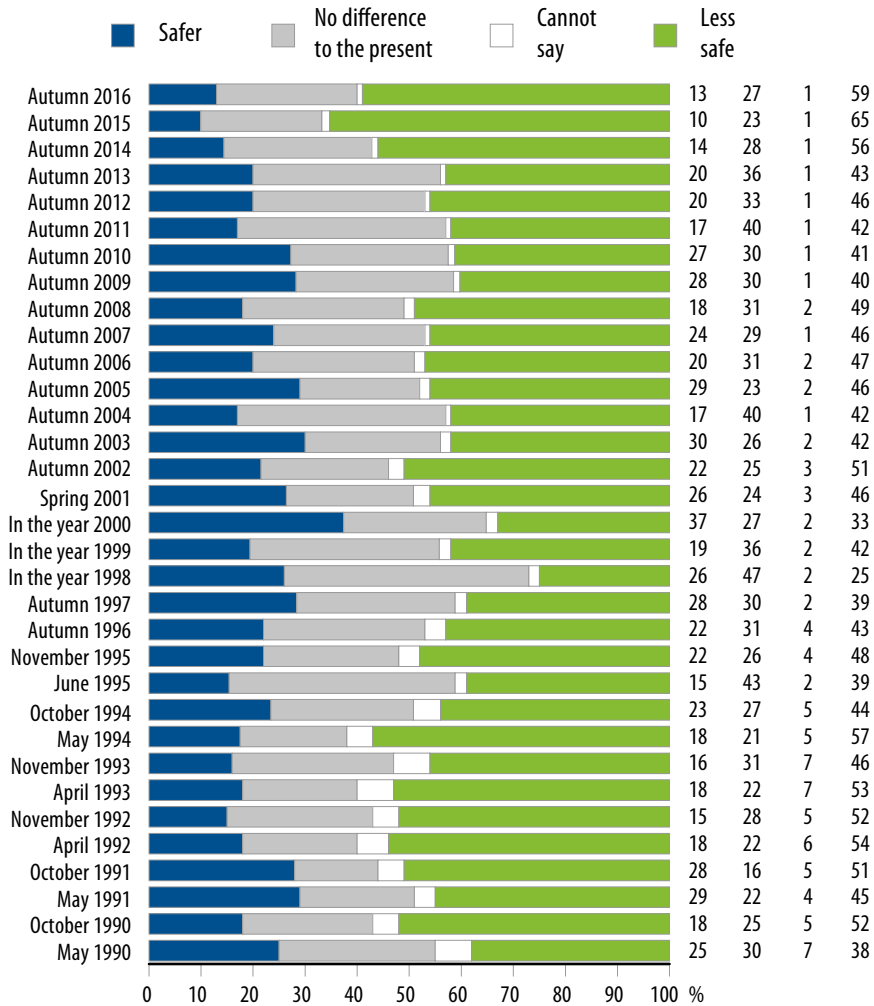
**Figure 31. A more secure or more insecure future**

*"Considering the present world situation as a whole, do you believe that during the next five years Finland and Finns will live in a safer or in a less safe world compared to the present?"*



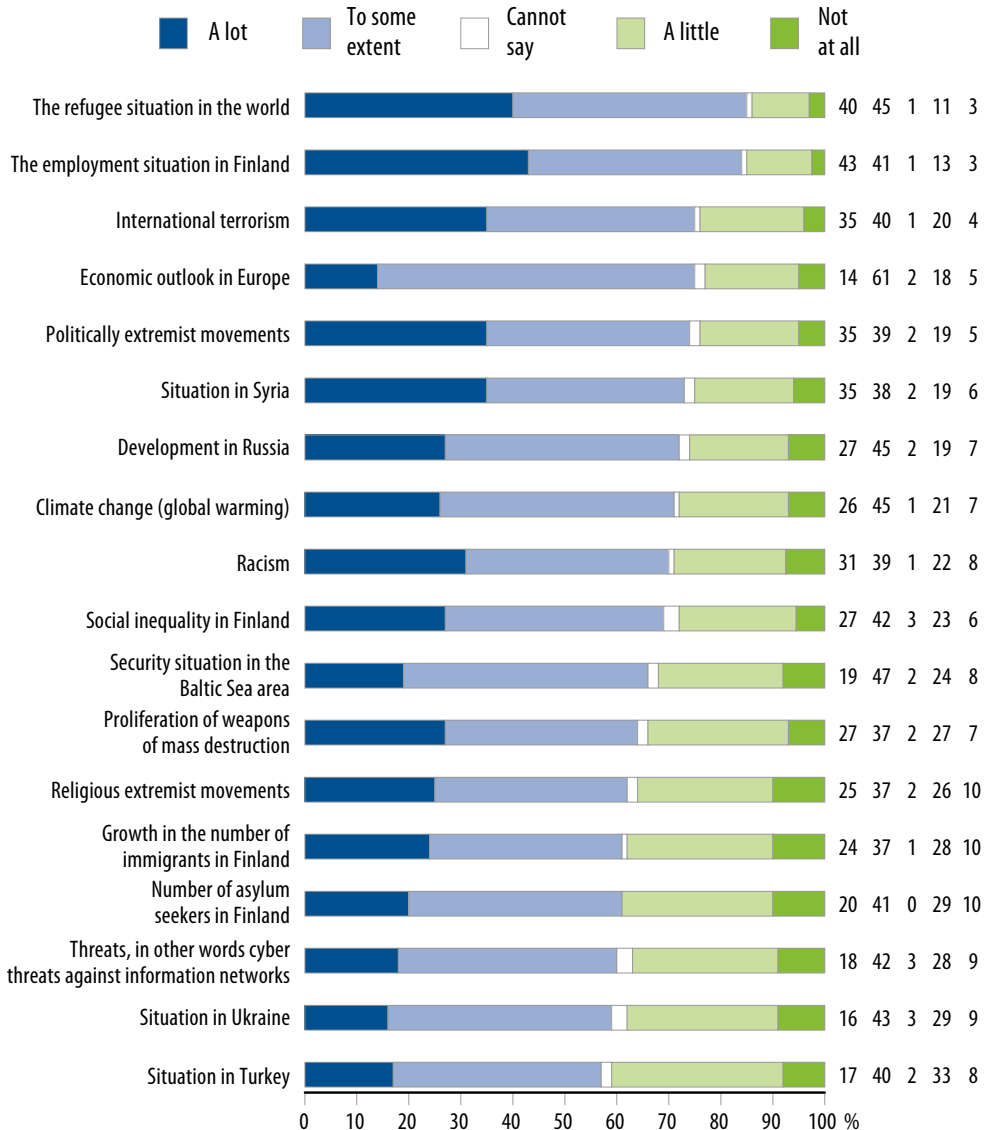
**Figure 32. A more secure or more insecure future**

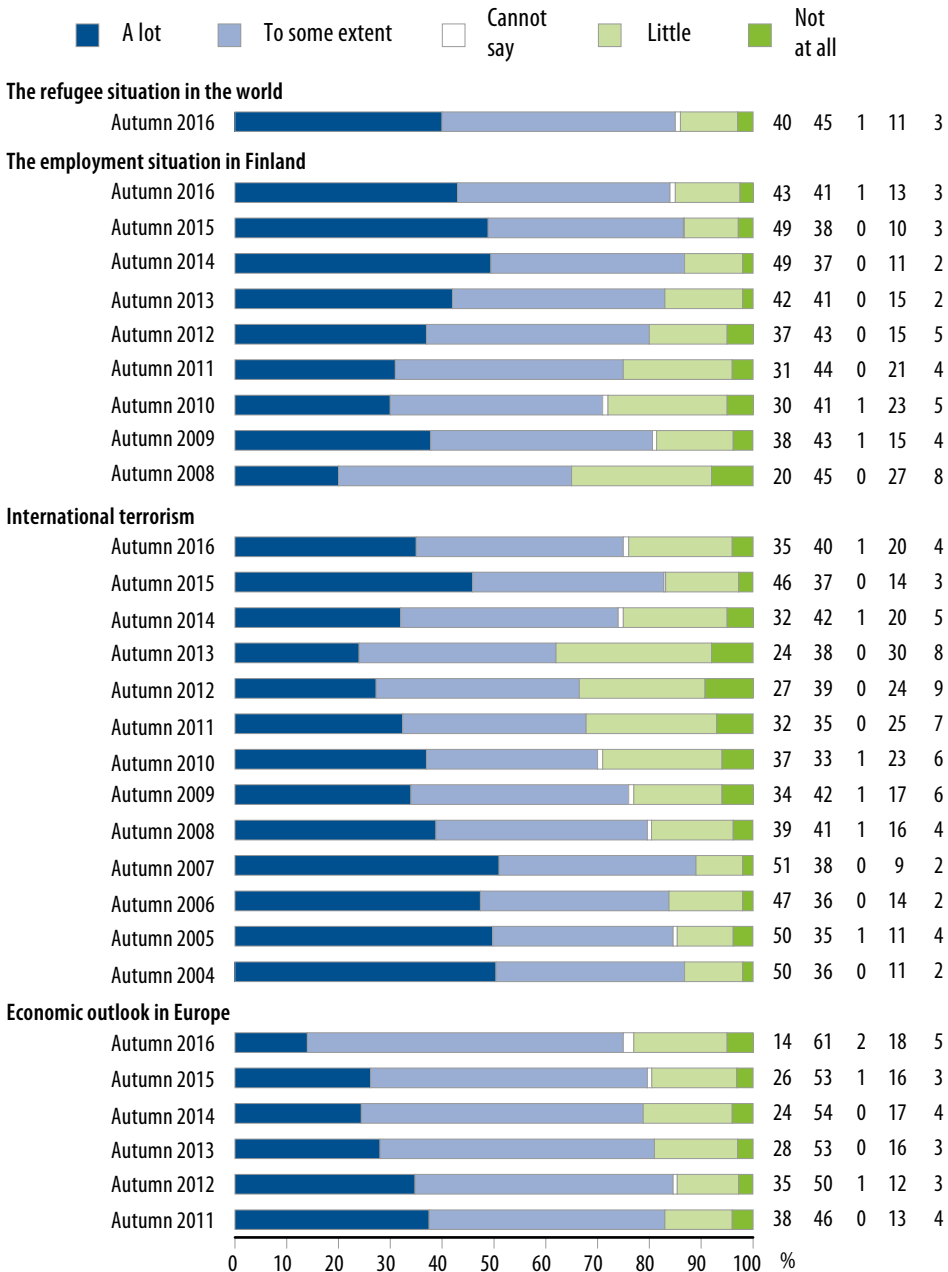
*"Considering the present world situation as a whole, do you believe that during the next five years Finland and Finns will live in a safer or in a less safe world compared to the present?"*



**Figure 33. Factors causing concern among the citizens**

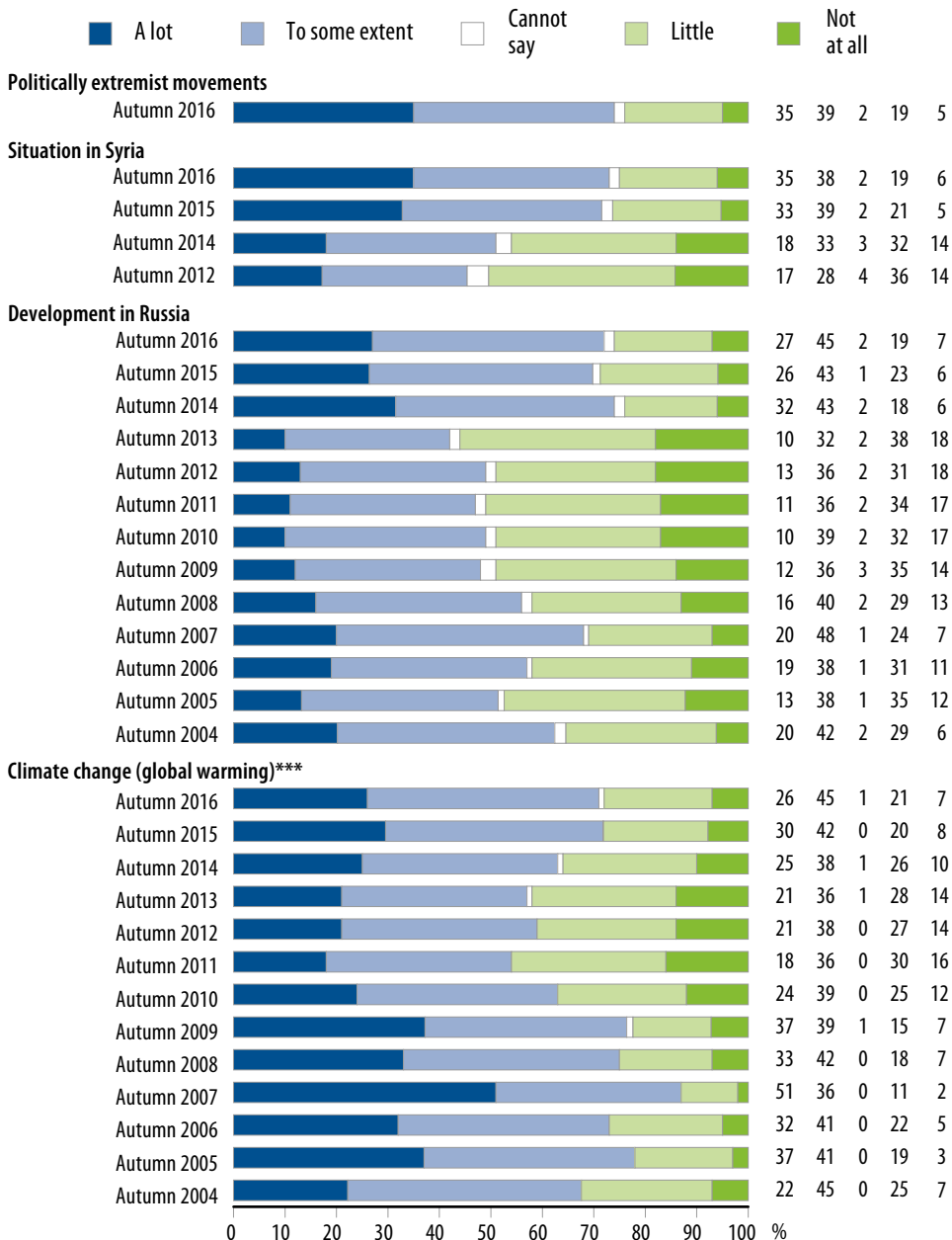
*"How would you assess the following phenomena and actors? To what extent do they make you worry about the future?"*



**Figure 34. Factors causing concern among the citizens (I)***"How would you assess the following phenomena and actors? To what extent do they make you worry about the future?"*

**Figure 35. Factors causing concern among the citizens (II)**

*"How would you assess the following phenomena and actors? To what extent do they make you worry about the future?"*

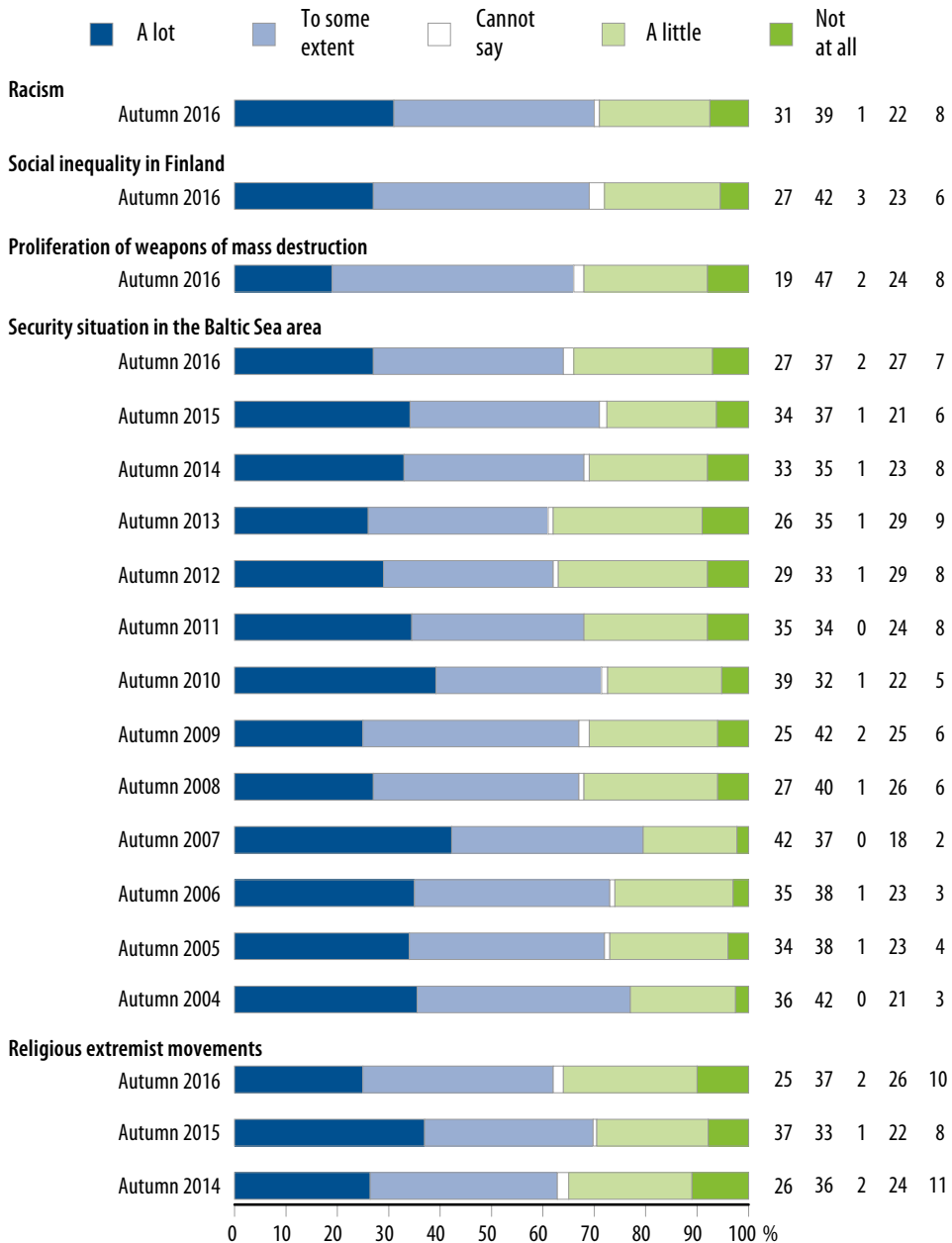


\*\*\*) 2004-2015 Global warming



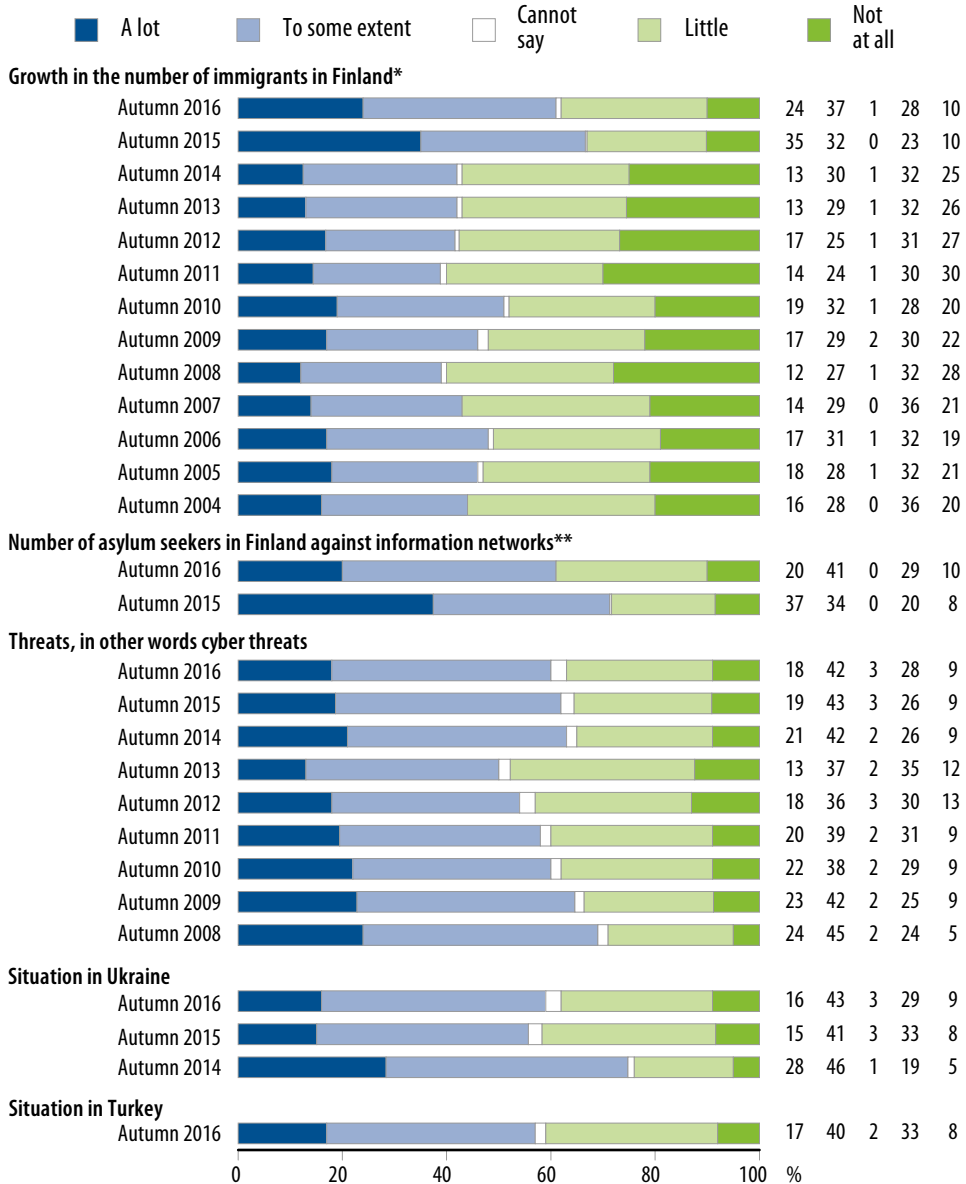
**Figure 36. Factors causing concern among the citizens (III)**

*"How would you assess the following phenomena and actors? To what extent do they make you worry about the future?"*



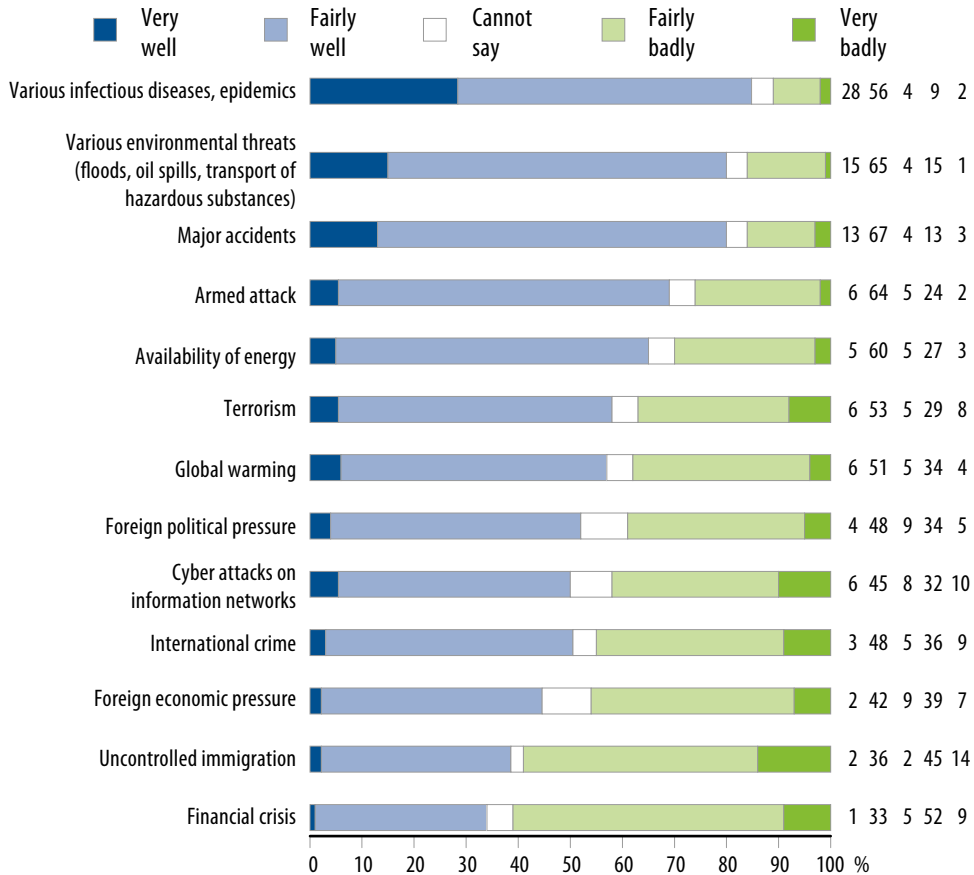
**Figure 37. Factors causing concern among the citizens (IV)**

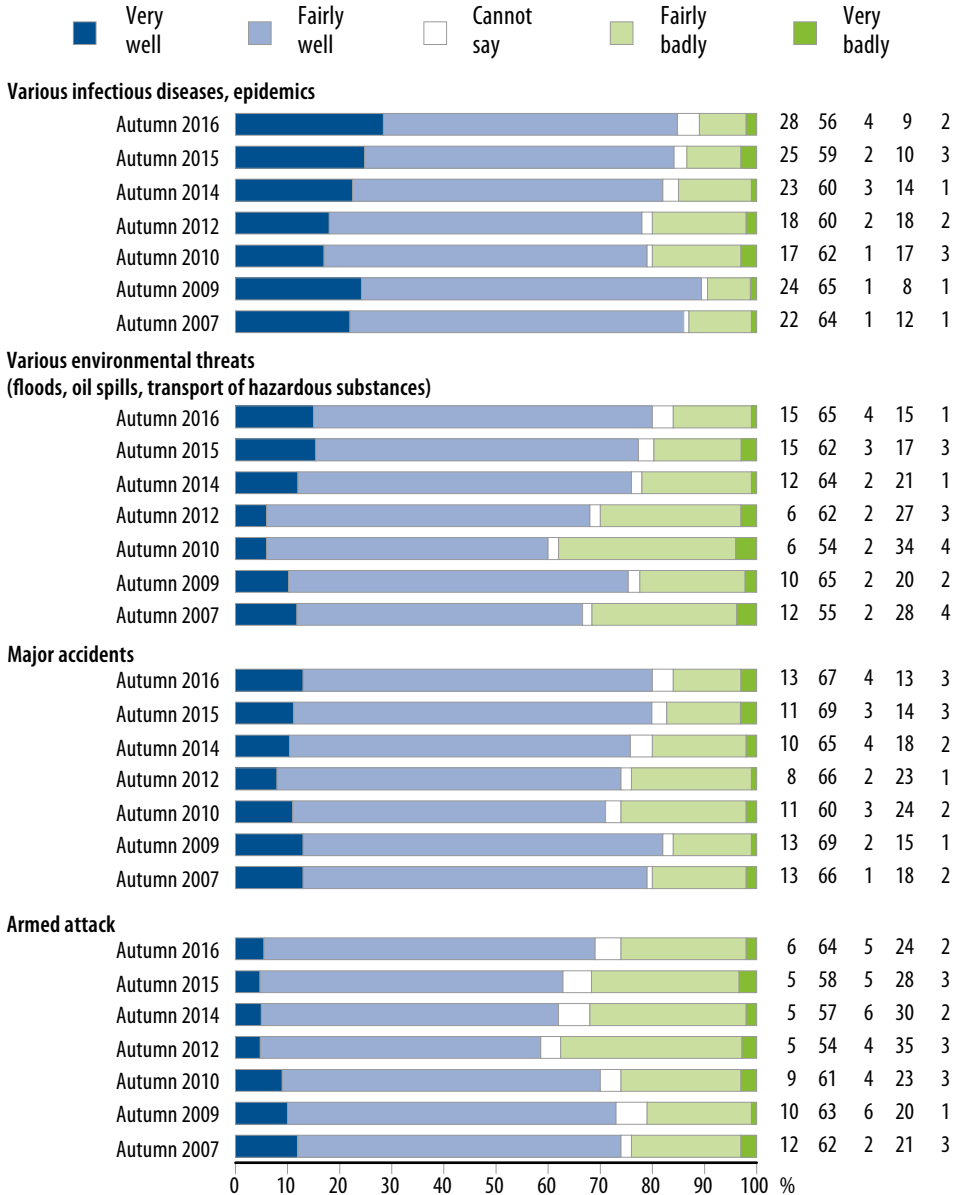
*"How would you assess the following phenomena and actors? To what extent do they make you worry about the future?"*

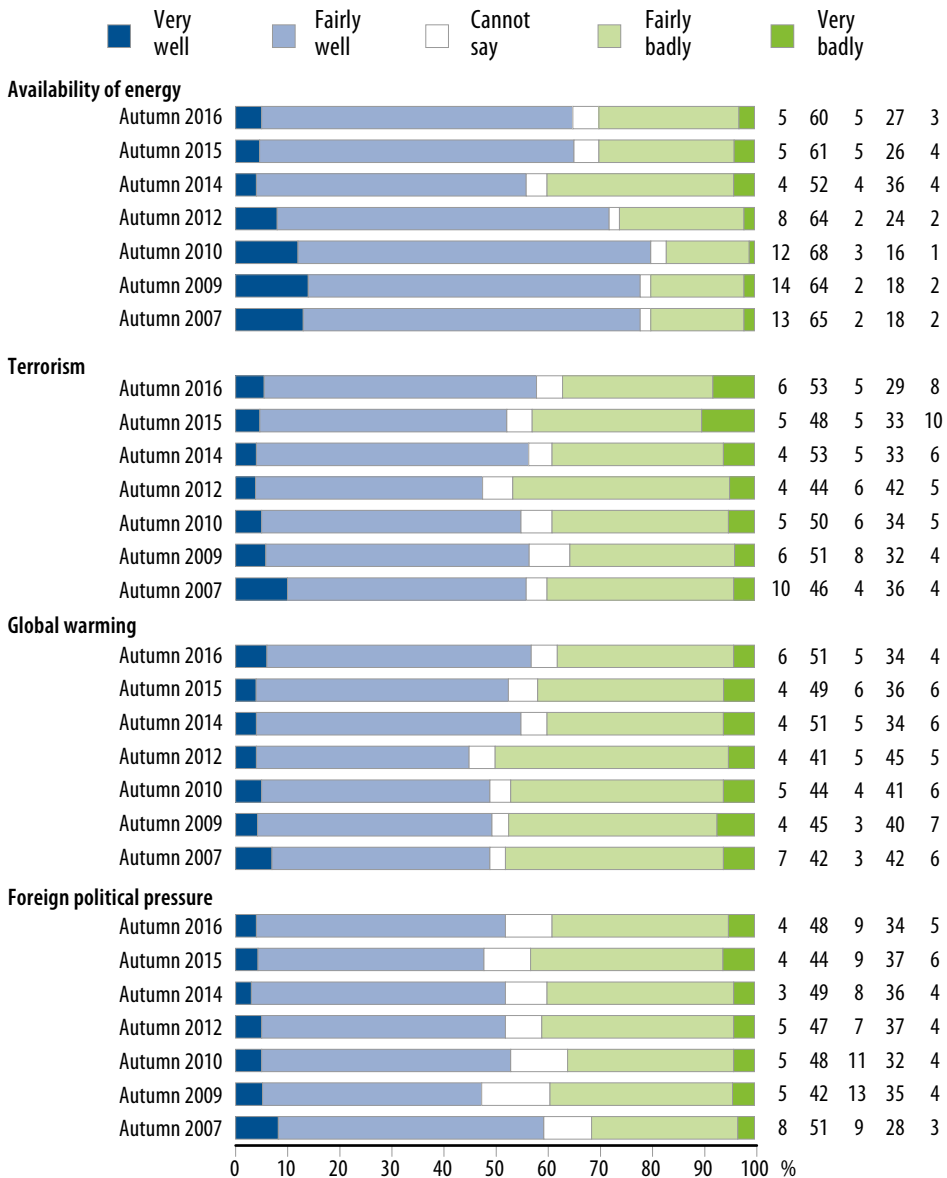


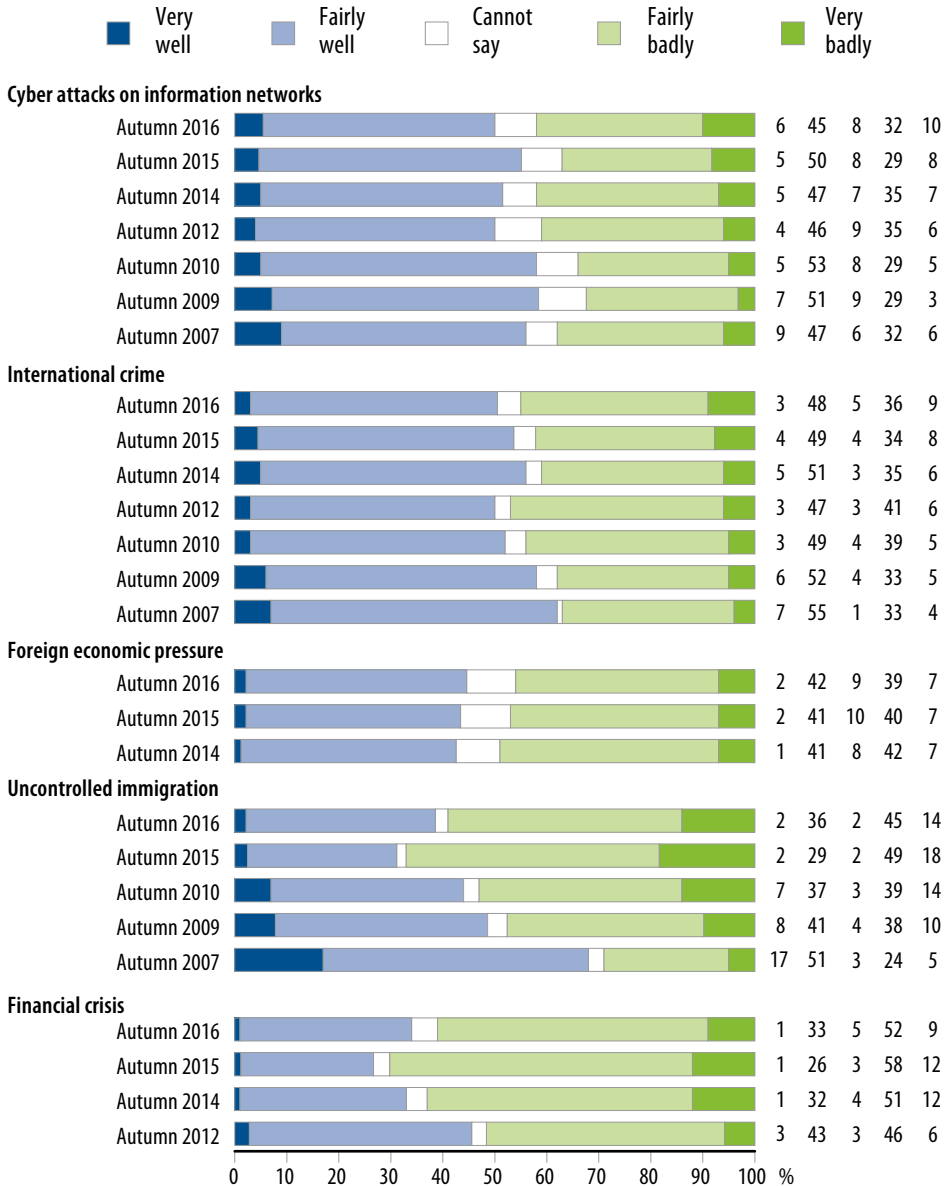
\*) 2013 The number of immigrants in Finland

\*\*) 2008-2012 Cyber threats against information networks

**Figure 38. Preparedness for various threats***"How well do you think Finland has prepared for the following security threats?"*

**Figure 39. Preparedness for various threats (I)***"How well do you think Finland has prepared for the following security threats?"*

**Figure 40. Preparedness for various threats (II)***"How well do you think Finland has prepared for the following security threats?"*

**Figure 41. Preparedness for various threats (III)***"How well do you think Finland has prepared for the following security threats?"*

## The Research Branch of ABDI in 2015–2019


Chair	Harriet Lonka, Doctor of Philosophy
Vice Chair	Jan Koskimies, Parliamentary Secretary
Members	Soili Haverinen, Doctoral Student of Theology
	Anna Jungner - Nordgren, Public Relations Secretary
	Mikko Kinnunen, Director
	Marko Kivelä, Director, Public Relations and International Affairs Unit
	Antti Koskela, Expert in Economic Affairs
	Esko Kurvinen, CEO
	Anni Lahtinen, Secretary General
	Juha Mäenpää, Vocational Special Needs Teacher
	Timo Perälä, Senior Inspector
	Jussi Salonranta, Policy Planner
	Jenna Simula, Parliamentary Assistant, BBA
	Unto Vesa, Researcher Emeritus
	Heli Viiri, Doctor of Agriculture and Forest, Special Researcher
Branch-specific experts	Teija Mankkinen, Doctor of Social Sciences, Head of Research and Development
	Teemu Tallberg, Doctor of Philosophy, Professor of Military Sociology

## Chairs of the ABDI in 2015-2019

Chair	Sofia Vikman, Member of Parliament
Vice Chair	Petteri Leino, Special Adviser to the Minister of Defence
Vice Chair	Markku Pakkanen, Member of Parliament
Secretariat	Heli Santala, Secretary General
	Markus Kinkku, Assistant Secretary General







Advisory Board for Defence Information, ABDI (MTS in Finnish), is a permanent parliamentary committee set up by the Government. Administratively it is in the Ministry of Defence.

ABDI conduct surveys on the opinions and attitudes of Finns regarding security policy and factors affecting them.

## MTS

Ministry of Defence  
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00131 HELSINKI

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